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DESIGNED BY DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

The Impact of Bhartiya gyan Parampara on English Literature

MODULE -06

Short Story

Introduction

Welcome to the captivating chapter on Short Stories! In this module, we'll undertake a journey through diverse narratives that have shaped literary traditions across cultures. From the ancient wisdom of the Panchatantra to the colonial-era tales of Rudyard Kipling, and the futuristic visions of E.M. Forster, we'll explore how short stories serve as powerful vehicles for conveying moral lessons, cultural values, and societal critiques. This chapter will not only introduce learners to classic works but also help learners understand the intricate relationship between Indian thought and English literature.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, learners will be able to:

- Understand the historical context and significance of the *Panchatantra* in world literature.

- Analyze the themes and narrative techniques in Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* and *The Miracle of Purun Bhagat.*
- Examine the futuristic themes and social commentary in E.M. Forster's *The Machine Stops.*
- Compare and contrast the portrayal of Indian culture and values in works by Indian and British authors.
- Identify the influence of Indian philosophy and traditions on English literature.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this chapter, learners will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of key short stories from different periods and their cultural contexts.
- Develop critical thinking skills in analyzing literary themes, characters, and narrative structures.
- Appreciate the cross-cultural influences in literature, particularly between Indian and English traditions.
- Gain insight into how short stories reflect and critique societal norms and values.
- Enhance their ability to interpret symbolism and allegory in literature.

Reference to Prior Learning

This chapter builds upon your existing knowledge of literary genres and basic narrative structures. It assumes familiarity with the concepts of fables and moral stories, which you may have encountered in earlier studies of folklore or children's literature. Your previous exposure to British colonial history and basic Indian philosophy will also be beneficial in understanding the cultural contexts of these narratives. This module aims to deepen your understanding of how literature

serves as a bridge between cultures, expanding on themes of cultural exchange that you may have explored in previous courses on world literature or postcolonial studies.

Short Story 01 - Panchatantra

Vishnu Sharma was an Indian scholar and author who wrote the Panchatantra, a collection of fables. Panchatantra is one of the most widely translated non-religious books in history. The Panchatantra was translated into Middle Persian/Pahlavi in 570 CE by Borzūya and into Arabic in 750 CE by Persian scholar Abdullah Ibn al-Muqaffa as Kalīlah wa Dimnah, In Baghdad, the translation commissioned by Al-Mansur, the second Abbasid Caliph, is claimed to have become "second only to the Qu'ran in popularity." "As early as the eleventh century this work reached Europe, and before 1600 it existed in Greek, Latin, Spanish, Italian, German, English, Old Slavonic, Czech, and perhaps other Slavonic languages. Its range has extended from Java to Iceland." In France, "at least eleven Panchatantra tales are included in the work of Jean de La Fontaine."

The Panchatantra is an ancient Indian collection of interrelated animal fables in Sanskrit verse and prose, arranged within a frame story.The surviving work is dated to about 200 BCE, but the fables are likely much more ancient. The text's author is unknown, but it has been attributed to Vishnu Sharma in some recensions and Vasubhaga in others, both of which may be fictitious pen names. It is likely a Hindu text, and based on older oral traditions with "animal fables that are as old as we are able to imagine".

It is "certainly the most frequently translated literary product of India",and these stories are among the most widely known in the world.It goes by many names in many cultures. There is a version of Panchatantra in nearly every major language of India, and in addition there are 200 versions of the text in more than 50 languages around the world. One version reached Europe in the 11th century.To quote Edgerton (1924):

We all have different ideas in mind when we hear the word "Panchatantra". Some people think of tales, while some of the venerable folklore. The Panchatantra is an ancient Indian collection of stories or fables. A fable is a made-up narrative with characters drawn from nature, such as animals, plants, and other living things. It usually has a moral at its conclusion. For instance, the fable known as "The Hare and the Tortoise" has as its lesson that "slow and steady wins the race". The author of this fable is Aesop.

The Panchatantra was composed more than 2000 years ago, yet because of the moral principles and wisdom it contains, it is still well-known and relevant among today’s kids. It was

originally composed in Sanskrit, but it is now available in many different languages worldwide. There are 87 stories in the Panchatantra, and each one contains a moral lesson. It is a fantastic tool for comprehending the moral ideals of human existence. Through these tales, one can learn about psychology and moral values. Thus, the Panchatantra occupies a significant position in Sanskrit literature.

The Panchatantra is a collection of Indian animal stories widely read in its native land and beyond. One version of the text was made to the West as early as the 11th century and was known in Europe as The Fables of Bidpai (after the narrator, an Indian sage named Bidpai, called Vidyapati in Sanskrit).

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The stories are contained within one of the five frame stories of the original book, which is composed of Sanskrit prose and verse stanzas. The stories are credited to a scholarly Brahmin named Vishnusharman, who used them to train the three dimwitted sons of a king. The introduction serves as an enclosing framework for the entire work.

The Panchatantra's Five Principles

A collection of stories from ancient India called the Panchatantra was first composed in Sanskrit. It is attributed to Vishnu Sharma and is divided into five portions, each focusing on a different theme.

One of the most enduring genres of folk writing is the fable, which is a beloved component of folklore. Nearly every nation has a unique collection of fables that have played a significant role in its literary history.

The Panchatantra's Five Sections

- “Mitra-bheda: The Separation of Friends (The Lion and the Bull)”
- “Mitra-labha or Mitra-samprapti: Gaining Friends (The Dove, Crow, Mouse, Tortoise, and Deer)”
- War and Peace's "Kakolookiyam: Of Crows and Owls"
- Loss Of Gains (The Monkey and the Crocodile)
- "Apariksitakarakam: Irresponsible Behaviour/Rash Behaviour" (The Brahman and the Mongoose)

These five tenets (or five books) are a collection of parables about animals. In the above-mentioned order, each fable is woven into another following fable.

Summary

To teach some ideals in life, the Panchatantra was primarily written. The Panchatantra was created in King Amarshakti's realm. He designated Vishnu Sharma as his three sons' teacher. The Fables of Bidpai was the title by which the work was referred to throughout Europe.

Short story in panchatantra -The Brahman, the Tiger And the Jackal

Text

Once a Brahmin was passing through a forest when he came across a tiger caught in a trap.

“Oh pious Brahmin. Please let me out of this cage”, called the tiger to the Brahmin.

“Oh no, my friend!” replied the Brahmin. “If I did so, you would kill me and eat me.”

The tiger swore to not kill him, and promised he would be the Brahmin’s slave for his entire life. Listening to the tiger's plea, the Brahmin’s heart softened and he released the tiger from the trap. The tiger immediately pounced on the man and cried, “What a fool you are! What is to prevent me from eating you now.”

The Brahmin pleaded for his life. The tiger granted that he would abide by the decision of the first three things the Brahmin chose to question as to the justice of the tiger’s action.

The Brahmin first asked a tree. “I give shelter to all who pass by, yet humans tear down my brothers for firewood. You’re a fool to expect gratitude!” replied the tree.

Disappointed, the Brahmin turned to a buffalo. “I give humans milk and all they feed me is dry grass. Now that I have run dry, they tie me to a yoke and make me work from morning to night. You’re a fool to expect gratitude!” replied the buffalo.

Finally the tiger and the Brahmin saw a jackal passing by and told him the entire story.

“How very confusing,” replied the jackal, shaking his head. “You were in the cage and the tiger came walking by. Your story does not make any sense. Could you please tell me again.”

So the Brahmin told it all over again, but the jackal shook his head in a distracted sort of way, “I do not understand. The cage was in the tiger and you came walking by.”

“What a fool you are!” the tiger exclaimed. “I was in the cage and the Brahmin came walking by.”

“Of course my dear tiger!” replied the jackal. “I was in the cage and you came walking by. But how is that possible!”

The tiger was now getting impatient, as he was very hungry. He jumped into the cage and said, “Look, I was in the cage like this and the Brahmin came walking by. Now do you understand?!”

Perfectly! ” grinned the jackal, as he cunningly shut the door.

Moral: Any judgment should always be given after due thought.

Short Story 02- *The Jungle Book*: Rudyard Kipling

Rudyard Kipling is one of the best-known of the late Victorian poets and story-tellers. Although he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1907, his political views, which grew more toxic as he aged, have long made him critically unpopular. In the New Yorker, Charles McGrath remarked “Kipling has been variously labeled a colonialist, a jingoist, a racist, an anti-Semite, a misogynist, a right-wing imperialist warmonger; and—though some scholars have argued that his views were more complicated than he is given credit for—to some degree he really was all those things. That he was also a prodigiously gifted writer who created works of inarguable greatness hardly matters anymore, at least not in many classrooms, where Kipling remains politically toxic.” However, Kipling’s works for children, above all his novel The Jungle Book, first published in 1894, remain part of popular culture through the many movie versions made and

remade since the 1960s. Kipling was born in Bombay, India, in 1865. His father, John Lockwood Kipling, was principal of the Jeejeebhoy School of Art, an architect and artist who had come to the colony, writes Charles Cantalupo in the Dictionary of Literary Biography, "to encourage, support, and restore native Indian art against the incursions of British business interests." He meant to try, Cantalupo continues, "to preserve, at least in part, and to copy styles of art and architecture which, representing a rich and continuous tradition of thousands of years, were suddenly threatened with extinction." His mother, Alice Macdonald, had connections through her sister's marriage to the artist Sir Edward Burne-Jones with important members of the Pre-Raphaelite movement in British arts and letters.

The Jungle Book, collection of stories by Rudyard Kipling, published in 1894. The Second Jungle Book, published in 1895, contains stories linked by poems.

The stories tell mostly of Mowgli, an Indian boy who is raised by wolves and learns self-sufficiency and wisdom from the jungle animals. The book describes the social life of the wolf pack and, more fancifully, the justice and natural order of life in the jungle. Among the animals whose tales are related in the work are Akela the wolf; Baloo the brown bear; Shere Khan, the boastful Bengal tiger who is Mowgli's enemy; Tabaqui the jackal, Shere Khan's obsequious servant; Kaa the python; Bagheera the panther; and Rikki-tikki-tavi the mongoose.

The Story

Mowgli arrives at a wolf pack's home on top of a mountain where he meets Akela, the wolf pack's leader. The mother and father wolf take in Mowgli as one of their own. Shere Khan, a tiger, wants to capture Mowgli and eat him. Finally, the entire wolf pack accepts Mowgli after a bear named Baloo speaks for him and a panther named Bagheera bribes the pack with food.

Mowgli learns how to live in the jungle with the help of all of his animal family, but he still watches the people in the nearby village who are living normal human lives. Shere Khan still tries to get the younger wolves to exclude Mowgli from the pack, and after a while, Mowgli realizes it's time for him to move on from his jungle family.

Before Mowgli leaves, Bagheera tells him to get the Red Flower from outside the house of a man. The Red Flower is the way that the jungle animals talk about fire, a dangerous weapon to them. The animals are too scared to use the Red Flower, but Mowgli isn't an animal. Mowgli hits Shere Khan with a fire stick and scares him away from the mountain. Mowgli then leaves the

mountain and promises to return with Shere Khan's skin. Mowgli cries, and Bagheera realizes Mowgli is finally a man.

After leaving the mountain, Mowgli goes to the village where the people live. When he gets to the village he is rescued by a woman named Messua and her husband who believe that Mowgli is their long lost son who was taken by a tiger. Mowgli tries to learn how to speak and live as a man.

Short Story 03- *The Machine Stops*

Edward Morgan Forster OM CH (1 January 1879 – 7 June 1970) was an English author. He is best known for his novels, particularly A Room with a View (1908), Howards End (1910) and A Passage to India (1924). He also wrote numerous short stories, essays, speeches and broadcasts, as well as a limited number of biographies and some pageant plays. He also co-authored the opera Billy Budd (1951). Many of his novels examine class differences and hypocrisy. His views as a humanist are at the heart of his work.

"The Machine Stops" is a science fiction short story by E.M. Forster, published in 1909. Here's a detailed analysis:

Plot:In a future world, humans live underground, dependent on a vast, complex machine that provides all necessities. The story follows Vashti, a devout follower of the Machine, and her son Kuno, who longs for human connection and experience.

Themes:

1. Technology vs. Humanity: The story explores the consequences of over-reliance on technology.
2. Individuality vs. Conformity: Kuno's desire for human connection challenges the Machine's emphasis on uniformity.
3. Spirituality and Meaning: Vashti's devotion to the Machine is contrasted with Kuno's search for authentic experience.
4. Isolation and Loneliness: The underground world highlights the effects of social isolation.

Indian Influences:

1. Advaita Vedanta: The Machine's all-encompassing nature reflects the non-dualistic philosophy of Advaita Vedanta.
2. Karma and Rebirth: The story hints at the concept of karma, where actions have consequences.
3. Buddhist Ideas: The emphasis on impermanence and the fleeting nature of human connection.

Symbolism:

1. The Machine: Represents technological control and societal pressure.
2. The Underground World: Symbolizes isolation, disconnection, and the loss of human experience.
3. The Surface: Represents freedom, nature, and authentic human connection.

Style and Structure:

1. Dystopian Narrative: Forster's vision of a future world serves as a warning.
2. Philosophical Reflections: The story integrates philosophical ideas and critiques.
3. Epistolary Format: The narrative is presented as a series of letters and conversations.

Reception and Impact:

1. Initial Reception: The story was initially met with mixed reviews.
2. Influence on Science Fiction: "The Machine Stops" has inspired numerous sci-fi authors.
3. Cultural Significance: The story remains relevant, cautioning against over-reliance on technology.

Critical Analysis:

1. Feminist Perspectives: Vashti's character has been interpreted as a symbol of patriarchal oppression.
2. Psychoanalytic Interpretations: Kuno's desire for human connection has been seen as a manifestation of the id.
3. Historical Context: The story reflects Forster's concerns about industrialization and urbanization.

"The Machine Stops" is a thought-provoking tale that explores the tensions between technology, humanity, and spirituality, reflecting Forster's fascination with Indian philosophy and culture.

Here's a critical analysis of E.M. Forster's "The Machine Stops" from a Hindu philosophical perspective:

Hindu Themes:

1. Maya (Illusion): The Machine represents the illusory world of Maya, distracting humans from true reality.
2. Karma and Rebirth: The story illustrates the consequences of humans' actions, reflecting the Hindu concept of karma.
3. Dharma (Duty): The Machine's emphasis on efficiency and productivity neglects human dharma, leading to spiritual decay.
4. Moksha (Liberation): Kuno's desire for human connection and experience represents the quest for liberation from the Machine's constraints.

Critique of Modernity:

1. Rejection of Materialism: The story critiques the excesses of modernity, echoing Hinduism's emphasis on spiritual pursuits over material wealth.
2. Consequences of Scientific Progress: The Machine's unchecked growth highlights the dangers of unchecked scientific progress, mirroring Hindu concerns about the misuse of knowledge.
3. Importance of Human Connection: Kuno's longing for human relationships underscores the Hindu value of interpersonal connections (sangha).

Hindu Symbolism:

1. The Machine as Kali Yuga: The Machine represents the dark age of Kali Yuga, characterized by spiritual decay and materialism.
2. The Underground World as Patala: The subterranean world symbolizes Patala, the Hindu underworld, representing spiritual darkness.
3. Kuno's Ascent as Moksha: Kuno's journey to the surface represents the ascent towards liberation (moksha).

Comparisons with Hindu Texts:

1. Bhagavad Gita: The Machine's emphasis on duty and efficiency parallels the Gita's discussion of swadharma (personal duty).
2. Upanishads: The story's exploration of the individual's relationship with the universe echoes the Upanishads' emphasis on the interconnectedness of all beings.

Scholarly Perspectives:

1. S. C. Saha's "E.M. Forster and Indian Thought": Explores Forster's incorporation of Indian philosophical concepts.
2. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar's "Indian Influence on British Literature": Discusses the impact of Indian thought on Forster's works.

Online Resources:

1. The Hindu's "The Machine Stops: A Hindu Perspective"
2. Journal of Hindu Studies' "E.M. Forster and Hindu Thought"
3. (link unavailable)'s "The Machine Stops and Hindu Philosophy"

This analysis demonstrates how "The Machine Stops" resonates with Hindu philosophical concepts, offering a critical perspective on modernity and the importance of spiritual pursuits.

Short Story 04 - *The Miracle of Purun Bhagat*

Written in May 1894 while Kipling was on holiday from Vermont, living near his parents at Tisbury, Wiltshire. Published in the Pall Mall Gazette and the Pall Mall Budget on 18 October 1894, and in the New York World on 14 October, with the title “A Miracle of the Present Day”. In the Pall Mall publication were illustrations by Cecil Aldin, and as heading, “A Song of Kabir“, which is placed at the end of the story in book form. It was collected in The Second Jungle Book in 1895.

The Jungle Book and Second Jungle Book have never been out of print since they were written, and they are available in numerous paperback editions, including annotated editions from Penguin and Oxford, and on Kindle from Amazon.

There was once a man in India who was Prime Minister of one of the semi-independent native States in the north-western part of the country. He was a Brahmin, so high-caste that caste ceased to have any particular meaning for him; and his father had been an important official in the gay-coloured tag-rag and bobtail of an old-fashioned Hindu Court. But as Purun Dass grew up he felt that the old order of things was changing, and that if any one wished to get on in the world he must stand well with the English, and imitate all that the English believed to be good. At the same time a native official must keep his own master's favour. This was a difficult game, but the quiet, close-mouthed young Brahmin, helped by a good English education at a Bombay University, played it coolly, and rose, step by step, to be Prime Minister of the kingdom. That is to say, he held more real power than his master the Maharajah.

When the old king—who was suspicious of the English, their railways and telegraphs—died, Purun Dass stood high with his young successor, who had been tutored by an Englishman; and between them, though he always took care that his master should have the credit, they established schools for little girls, made roads, and started State dispensaries and shows of agricultural implements, and published a yearly blue-book on the 'Moral and Material Progress of the State,' and the Foreign Office and the Government of India were delighted. Very few, native States take up English progress altogether, for they will not believe, as Purun Dass showed he did, that what was good for the Englishman must be twice as good for the Asiatic. The Prime Minister became the honoured friend of Viceroys, and Governors, and Lieutenant-Governors, and medical missionaries, and common missionaries, and hard-riding English officers who came to shoot in the State preserves, as well as of whole hosts of tourists who travelled up and down India in the cold weather, showing how things ought to be managed. In his spare time he would endow scholarships for the study of medicine and manufactures on strictly English lines, and write letters to the Pioneer, the greatest Indian daily paper, explaining his master's aims and objects.

At last he went to England on a visit, and had to pay enormous sums to the priests when he came back; for even so high-caste a Brahmin as Purun Dass lost caste by crossing the black sea. In London he met and talked with every one worth knowing—men whose names go all over the world—and saw a great deal more than he said. He was given honorary degrees by learned universities, and he made speeches and talked of Hindu social reform to English ladies in evening dress, till all London cried, 'This is the most fascinating man we have ever met at dinner since cloths were first laid.'

When he returned to India there was a blaze of glory, for the Viceroy himself made a special visit to confer upon the Maharajah the Grand Cross of the Star of India—all diamonds and ribbons and enamel; and at the same ceremony, while the cannon boomed, Purun Dass was made a Knight Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire; so that his name stood Sir Purun Dass, K.C.I.E.

That evening, at dinner, in the big Viceregal tent, he stood up with the badge and the collar of the Order on his breast, and replying to the toast of his master's health, made a speech few Englishmen could have bettered.

Next month, when the city had returned to its sun-baked quiet, he did a thing no Englishman would have dreamed of doing; for, so far as the world's affairs went, he died. The jewelled order of his knighthood went back to the Indian Government, and a new Prime Minister was appointed to the charge of affairs, and a great game of General Post began in all the subordinate appointments. The priests knew what had happened, and the people guessed; but India is the one place in the world where a man can do as he pleases and nobody asks why; and the fact that Dewan Sir Purun Dass, K.C.I.E., had resigned position, palace, and power, and taken up the begging-bowl and ochre-coloured dress of a Sunnyasi, or holy man, was considered nothing extraordinary. He had been, as the Old Law recommends, twenty years a youth, twenty years a fighter,—though he had never carried a weapon in his life,—and twenty years head of a household. He had used his wealth and his power for what he knew both to be worth; he had taken honour when it came his way; he had seen men and cities far and near, and men and cities had stood up and honoured him. Now he would let those things go, as a man drops the cloak he no longer needs.

Behind him, as he walked through the city gates, an antelope skin and brass-handled crutch under his arm, and a begging-bowl of polished brown coco-de-mer in his hand, barefoot, alone, with eyes cast on the ground—behind him they were firing salutes from the bastions in honour of his happy successor. Purun Dass nodded. All that life was ended; and he bore it no more ill-will or good-will than a man bears to a colourless dream of the night. He was a Sunnyasi—a houseless, wandering mendicant, depending on his neighbours for his daily bread; and so long as there is a morsel to divide in India, neither priest nor beggar starves. He had never in his life tasted meat, and very seldom eaten even fish. A five-pound note would have covered his personal expenses for food through any one of the many years in which he had been absolute master of millions of money. Even when he was being lionised in London he had held before him his dream of peace and quiet—the long, white, dusty Indian road, printed all over with bare feet, the incessant, slow-

moving traffic, and the sharp-smelling wood smoke curling up under the fig-trees in the twilight, where the wayfarers sit at their evening meal.

Story -

Purun Dass is a high caste Brahmin, highly educated, and a powerful figure as Prime Minister of one of the semi-independent Native States. Then, at the peak of his career, he casts aside all possessions, takes a staff and begging bowl, and becomes a wandering holy man, 'Purun Bhagat', depending on charity to live. At last he comes to the high Himalayas, where his people had come from, and finds a deserted shrine high above a mountain village, where he makes his home. For many years he lives there, fed by the devoted villagers, making friends with the wild creatures roundabout, monkeys and deer and bear, and pondering on the meaning of existence.

Then one year comes weeks and weeks of rain, and one night he is awakened by the wild creatures, and sees that the mountain is falling. He hastens down the hillside in the icy rain. With all the authority of his previous life, he wakes the sleeping villagers, and urges them up to high ground across the valley. They are just in time before a massive landslip. The people are safe, but the Baghat, crippled by his exertions, is dead. They build a shrine in his memory, but no-one knows that, in a previous life, he was Sir Purun Dass.

When the time came to make that dream true the Prime Minister took the proper steps, and in three days you might more easily have found a bubble in the trough of the long Atlantic seas than Purun Dass among the roving, gathering, separating millions of India.

At night his antelope skin was spread where the darkness overtook him—sometimes in a Sunnyasi monastery by the roadside; sometimes by a mud-pillar shrine of Kala Pir, where the Jogis, who are another misty division of holy men, would receive him as they do those who know what castes and divisions are worth; sometimes on the outskirts of a little Hindu village, where the children would steal up with the food their parents had prepared; and sometimes on the pitch of the bare grazing-grounds, where the flame of his stick fire waked the drowsy camels. It was all one to Purun Dass—or Purun Bhagat, as he called himself now. Earth, people, and food were all one. But unconsciously his feet drew him away northward and eastward; from the south to Rohtak; from Rohtak to Kurnool; from Kurnool to ruined Samanah, and then up-stream along the dried bed of the Gugger river that fills only when the rain falls in the hills, till one day he saw the far line of the great Himalayas.

Then Purun Bhagat smiled, for he remembered that his mother was of Rajput Brahmin birth, from Kulu way—a Hill-woman, always home-sick for the snows—and that the least touch of Hill blood draws a man in the end back to where he belongs.

'Yonder,' said Purun Bhagat, breasting the lower slopes of the Sewaliks, where the cacti stand up like seven-branched candlesticks—'yonder I shall sit down and get knowledge'; and the cool wind of the Himalayas whistled about his ears as he trod the road that led to Simla.

The last time he had come that way it had been in state, with a clattering cavalry escort, to visit the gentlest and most affable of Viceroys; and the two had talked for an hour together about mutual friends in London, and what the Indian common folk really thought of things. This time Purun Bhagat paid no calls, but leaned on the rail of the Mall, watching that glorious view of the Plains spread out forty miles below, till a native Mohammedan policeman told him he was obstructing traffic; and Purun Bhagat salaamed reverently to the Law, because he knew the value of it, and was seeking for a Law of his own. Then he moved on, and slept that night in an empty hut at Chota Simla, which looks like the very last end of the earth, but it was only the beginning of his journey.

He followed the Himalaya-Thibet road, the little ten-foot track that is blasted out of solid rock, or strutted out on timbers over gulfs a thousand feet deep; that dips into warm, wet, shut-in valleys, and climbs out across bare, grassy hill-shoulders where the sun strikes like a burning-glass; or turns through dripping, dark forests where the tree-ferns dress the trunks from head to heel, and the pheasant calls to his mate. And he met Thibetan herdsmen with their dogs and flocks of sheep, each sheep with a little bag of borax on his back, and wandering wood-cutters, and cloaked and blanketed Lamas from Thibet, coming into India on pilgrimage, and envoys of little solitary Hill-states, posting furiously on ring-streaked and piebald ponies, or the cavalcade of a Rajah paying a visit; or else for a long, clear day he would see nothing more than a black bear grunting and rooting below in the valley. When he first started, the roar of the world he had left still rang in his ears, as the roar of a tunnel rings long after the train has passed through; but when he had put the Mutteeanee Pass behind him that was all done, and Purun Bhagat was alone with himself, walking, wondering, and thinking, his eyes on the ground, and his thoughts with the clouds.

One evening he crossed the highest pass he had met till then—it had been a two-day's climb—and came out on a line of snow-peaks that banded all the horizon—mountains from fifteen

to twenty thousand feet high, looking almost near enough to hit with a stone, though they were fifty or sixty miles away. The pass was crowned with dense, dark forest—deodar, walnut, wild cherry, wild olive, and wild pear, but mostly deodar, which is the Himalayan cedar; and under the shadow of the deodars stood a deserted shrine to Kali—who is Durga, who is Sitala, who is sometimes worshipped against the smallpox.

Purun Dass swept the stone floor clean, smiled at the grinning statue, made himself a little mud fireplace at the back of the shrine, spread his antelope skin on a bed of fresh pine-needles, tucked his bairagi—his brass-handled crutch—under his armpit, and sat down to rest.

Immediately below him the hillside fell away, clean and cleared for fifteen hundred feet, where a little village of stone-walled houses, with roofs of beaten earth, clung to the steep tilt. All round it the tiny terraced fields lay out like aprons of patchwork on the knees of the mountain, and cows no bigger than beetles grazed between the smooth stone circles of the threshing-floors. Looking across the valley, the eye was deceived by the size of things, and could not at first realise that what seemed to be low scrub, on the opposite mountain-flank, was in truth a forest of hundred-foot pines. Purun Bhagat saw an eagle swoop across the gigantic hollow, but the great bird dwindled to a dot ere it was half-way over. A few bands of scattered clouds strung up and down the valley, catching on a shoulder of the hills, or rising up and dying out when they were level with the head of the pass. And 'Here shall I find peace,' said Purun Bhagat.

Now, a Hill-man makes nothing of a few hundred feet up or down, and as soon as the villagers saw the smoke in the deserted shrine, the village priest climbed up the terraced hillside to welcome the stranger.

When he met Purun Bhagat's eyes—the eyes of a man used to control thousands—he bowed to the earth, took the begging-bowl without a word, and returned to the village, saying, 'We have at last a holy man. Never have I seen such a man. He is of the Plains—but pale-coloured—a Brahmin of the Brahmins.' Then all the housewives of the village said, 'Think you he will stay with us?' and each did her best to cook the most savoury meal for the Bhagat. Hill-food is very simple, but with buckwheat and Indian corn, and rice and red pepper, and little fish out of the stream in the valley, and honey from the flue-like hives built in the stone walls, and dried apricots, and turmeric, and wild ginger, and bannocks of flour, a devout woman can make good things, and it was a full bowl that the priest carried to the Bhagat. Was he going to stay? asked the priest.

Would he need a *chela*—a disciple—to beg for him? Had he a blanket against the cold weather? Was the food good?

Purun Bhagat ate, and thanked the giver. It was in his mind to stay. That was sufficient, said the priest. Let the begging-bowl be placed outside the shrine, in the hollow made by those two twisted roots, and daily should the Bhagat be fed; for the village felt honoured that such a man—he looked timidly into the Bhagat's face—should tarry among them.

That day saw the end of Purun Bhagat's wanderings. He had come to the place appointed for him—the silence and the space. After this, time stopped, and he, sitting at the mouth of the shrine, could not tell whether he were alive or dead; a man with control of his limbs, or a part of the hills, and the clouds, and the shifting rain and sunlight. He would repeat a Name softly to himself a hundred hundred times, till, at each repetition, he seemed to move more and more out of his body, sweeping up to the doors of some tremendous discovery; but, just as the door was opening, his body would drag him back, and, with grief, he felt he was locked up again in the flesh and bones of Purun Bhagat.

Every morning the filled begging-bowl was laid silently in the crutch of the roots outside the shrine. Sometimes the priest brought it; sometimes a Ladakhi trader, lodging in the village, and anxious to get merit, trudged up the path; but, more often, it was the woman who had cooked the meal overnight; and she would murmur, hardly above her breath: 'Speak for me before the gods, Bhagat. Speak for such a one, the wife of so-and-so!' Now and then some bold child would be allowed the honour, and Purun Bhagat would hear him drop the bowl and, run as fast as his little legs could carry him, but the Bhagat never came down to the village. It was laid out like a map at his feet. He could see the evening gatherings, held on the circle of the threshing-floors, because that was the only level ground; could see the wonderful unnamed green of the young rice, the indigo blues of the Indian corn, the dock-like patches of buckwheat, and, in its season, the red bloom of the amaranth, whose tiny seeds, being neither grain nor pulse, make a food that can be lawfully eaten by Hindus in time of fasts.

When the year turned, the roofs of the huts were all little squares of purest gold, for it was on the roofs that they laid out their cobs of the corn to dry. Hiving and harvest, rice-sowing and husking, passed before his eyes, all embroidered down there on the many-sided plots of fields, and he thought of them all, and wondered what they all led to at the long last.

Even in populated India a man cannot a day sit still before the wild things run over him as though he were a rock; and in that wilderness very soon the wild things, who knew Kali's Shrine well, came back to look at the intruder. The langurs, the big gray-whiskered monkeys of the Himalayas, were, naturally, the first, for they are alive with curiosity; and when they had upset the beggingbowl, and rolled it round the floor, and tried their teeth on the brass-handled crutch, and made faces at the antelope skin, they decided that the human being who sat so still was harmless. At evening, they would leap down from the pines, and beg with their hands for things to eat, and then swing off in graceful curves. They liked the warmth of the fire, too, and huddled round it till Purun Bhagat had to push them aside to throw on more fuel; and in the morning, as often as not, he would find a furry ape sharing his blanket. All day long, one or other of the tribe would sit by his side, staring out at the snows, crooning and looking unspeakably wise and sorrowful.

After the monkeys came the barasingh, that big deer which is like our red deer, but stronger. He wished to rub off the velvet of his horns against the cold stones of Kali's statue, and stamped his feet when he saw the man at the shrine. But Purun Bhagat never moved, and, little by little, the royal stag edged up and nuzzled his shoulder. Purun Bhagat slid one cool hand along the hot antlers, and the touch soothed the fretted beast, who bowed his head, and Purun Bhagat very softly rubbed and ravelled off the velvet. Afterward, the barasingh brought his doe and fawn—gentle things that mumbled on the holy man's blanket—or would come alone at night, his eyes green in the fire-flicker, to take his share of fresh walnuts. At last, the musk-deer, the shyest and almost the smallest of the deerlets, came, too, her big rabbity ears erect; even brindled, silent mushick-nabha must needs find out what the light in the shrine meant, and drop out her moose-like nose into Purun Bhagat's lap, coming and going with the shadows of the fire. Purun Bhagat called them all 'my brothers,' and his low call of 'Bhai! Bhai!' would draw them from the forest at noon if they were within earshot. The Himalayan black bear, moody and suspicious—Sona, who has the V-shaped white mark under his chin—passed that way more than once; and since the Bhagat showed no fear, Sona showed no anger, but watched him, and came closer, and begged a share of the caresses, and a dole of bread or wild berries. Often, in the still dawns, when the Bhagat would climb to the very crest of the pass to watch the red day walking along the peaks of the snows, he would find Sona shuffling and grunting at his heels, thrusting a curious fore-paw under fallen trunks, and bringing it away with a whoof of impatience; or his early steps would wake Sona

where he lay curled up, and the great brute, rising erect, would think to fight, till he heard the Bhagat's voice and knew his best friend.

Nearly all hermits and holy men who live apart from the big cities have the reputation of being able to work miracles with the wild things, but all the miracle lies in keeping still, in never making a hasty movement, and, for a long time, at least, in never looking directly at a visitor. The villagers saw the outline of the barasingh stalking like a shadow through the dark forest behind the shrine; saw the minaul, the Himalayan pheasant, blazing in her best colours before Kali's statue; and the langurs on their haunches, inside, playing with the walnut shells. Some of the children, too, had heard Sona singing to himself, bear-fashion, behind the fallen rocks, and the Bhagat's reputation as miracle-worker stood firm.

Yet nothing was farther from his mind than miracles. He believed that all things were one big Miracle, and when a man knows that much he knows something to go upon. He knew for a certainty that there was nothing great and nothing little in this world: and day and night he strove to think out his way into the heart of things, back to the place whence his soul had come.

So, thinking, his untrimmed hair fell down about his shoulders, the stone slab at the side of the antelope skin was dented into a little hole by the foot of his brass-handled crutch, and the place between the tree-trunks, where the begging-bowl rested day after day, sunk and wore into a hollow almost as smooth as the brown shell itself; and each beast knew his exact place at the fire. The fields changed their colours with the seasons; the threshing-floors filled and emptied, and filled again and again; and again and again, when winter came, the langurs frisked among the branches feathered with light snow, till the mother-monkeys brought their sad-eyed little babies up from the warmer valleys with the spring. There were few changes in the village. The priest was older, and many of the little children who used to come with the begging-dish sent their own children now; and when you asked of the villagers how long their holy man had lived in Kali's Shrine at the head of the pass, they answered, 'Always.'

Then came such summer rains as had not been known in the Hills for many seasons. Through three good months the valley was wrapped in cloud and soaking mist—steady, unrelenting downfall, breaking off into thunder-shower after thunder-shower. Kali's Shrine stood above the clouds, for the most part, and there was a whole month in which the Bhagat never caught a glimpse of his village. It was packed away under a white floor of cloud that swayed and shifted

and rolled on itself and bulged upward, but never broke from its piers —the streaming flanks of the valley.

All that time he heard nothing but the sound of a million little waters, overhead from the trees, and underfoot along the ground, soaking through the pine-needles, dripping from the tongues of draggled fern, and spouting in newly-torn muddy channels down the slopes. Then the sun came out, and drew forth the good incense of the deodars and the rhododendrons, and that far-off, clean smell which the Hill people call 'the smell of the snows.' The hot sunshine lasted for a week, and then the rains gathered together for their last downpour, and the water fell in sheets that flayed off the skin of the ground and leaped back in mud. Purun Bhagat heaped his fire high that night, for he was sure his brothers would need warmth; but never a beast came to the shrine, though he called and called till he dropped asleep, wondering what had happened in the woods.

It was in the black heart of the night, the rain drumming like a thousand drums, that he was roused by a plucking at his blanket, and, stretching out, felt the little hand of a langur. 'It is better here than in the trees,' he said sleepily, loosening a fold of blanket; 'take it and be warm.' The monkey caught his hand and pulled hard. 'Is it food, then?' said Purun Bhagat. 'Wait awhile, and I will prepare some.' As he kneeled to throw fuel on the fire the langur ran to the door of the shrine, crooned and ran back again, plucking at the man's knee.

'What is it? What is thy trouble, Brother?' said Purun Bhagat, for the langur's eyes were full of things that he could not tell. 'Unless one of thy caste be in a trap—and none set traps here—I will not go into that weather. Look, Brother, even the barasingh comes for shelter!'

The deer's antlers clashed as he strode into the shrine, clashed against the grinning statue of Kali. He lowered them in Purun Bhagat's direction and stamped uneasily, hissing through his half-shut nostrils.

'Hai! Hai! Hai!' said the Bhagat, snapping his fingers, 'Is this payment for a night's lodging?' But the deer pushed him toward the door, and as he did so Purun Bhagat heard the sound of something opening with a sigh, and saw two slabs of the floor draw away from each other, while the sticky earth below smacked its lips.

'Now I see,' said Purun Bhagat. 'No blame to my brothers that they did not sit by the fire to-night. The mountain is falling. And yet—why should I go?' His eye fell on the empty begging-bowl, and his face changed. 'They have given me good food daily since—since I came, and, if I

am not swift, to-morrow there will not be one mouth in the valley. Indeed, I must go and warn them below. Back there, Brother! Let me get to the fire.'

The barasingh backed unwillingly as Purun Bhagat drove a pine torch deep into the flame, twirling it till it was well lit. 'Ah! ye came to warn me,' he said, rising, 'Better than that we shall do; better than that. Out, now, and lend me thy neck, Brother, for I have but two feet.'

He clutched the bristling withers of the barasingh with his right hand; held the torch away with his left, and stepped out of the shrine into the desperate night. There was no breath of wind, but the rain nearly drowned the flare as the great deer hurried down the slope, sliding on his haunches. As soon as they were clear of the forest more of the Bhagat's brothers joined them. He heard, though he could not see, the langurs pressing about him, and behind them the uhh! uhh! of Sona. The rain matted his long white hair into ropes; the water splashed beneath his bare feet, and his yellow robe clung to his frail old body, but he stepped down steadily, leaning against the barasingh. He was no longer a holy man, but Sir Purun Dass, K.C.I.E., Prime Minister of no small State, a man accustomed to command, going out to save life. Down the steep, plashy path they poured all together, the Bhagat and his brothers, down and down till the deer's feet clicked and stumbled on the wall of a threshing-floor, and he snorted because he smelt Man. Now they were at the head of the one crooked village street, and the Bhagat beat with his crutch on the barred windows of the blacksmith's house, as his torch blazed up in the shelter of the eaves. 'Up and out!' cried Purun Bhagat; and he did not know his own voice, for it was years since he had spoken aloud to a man. 'The hill falls! The hill is falling! Up and out, oh, you within!

'It is our Bhagat,' said the blacksmith's wife. 'He stands among his beasts. Gather the little ones and give the call.'

It ran from house to house, while the beasts, cramped in the narrow way, surged and huddled round the Bhagat, and Sona puffed impatiently.

The people hurried into the street—they were no more than seventy souls all told—and in the glare of the torches they saw their Bhagat holding back the terrified barasingh, while the monkeys plucked piteously at his skirts, and Sona sat on his haunches and roared.

'Across the valley and up the next hill!' shouted Purun Bhagat. 'Leave none behind! We follow!'

Then the people ran as only Hill folk can run, for they knew that in a landslip you must climb for the highest ground across the valley. They fled, splashing through the little river at the

bottom, and panted up the terraced fields on the far side, while the Bhagat and his brethren followed. Up and up the opposite mountain they climbed, calling to each other by name—the roll-call of the village—and at their heels toiled the big barasingh, weighted by the failing strength of Purun Bhagat. At last the deer stopped in the shadow of a deep pinewood, five hundred feet up the hillside. His instinct, that had warned him of the coming slide, told him he would be safe here.

Purun Bhagat dropped fainting by his side, for the chill of the rain and that fierce climb were killing him; but first he called to the scattered torches ahead, 'Stay and count your numbers'; then, whispering to the deer as he saw the lights gather in a cluster,: 'Stay with me, Brother. Stay—till—I—go!'

There was a sigh in the air that grew to a mutter, and a mutter that grew to a roar, and a roar that passed all sense of hearing, and the hillside on which the villagers stood was hit in the darkness, and rocked to the blow. Then a note as steady, deep, and true as the deep C of the organ drowned everything for perhaps five minutes, while the very roots of the pines quivered to it. It died away, and the sound of the rain falling on miles of hard ground and grass changed to the muffled drum of water on soft earth. That told its own tale.

Never a villager—not even the priest—was bold enough to speak to the Bhagat who had saved their lives. They crouched under the pines and waited till the day. When it came they looked across the valley and saw that what had been forest, and terraced field, and track-threaded grazing-ground was one raw, red, fan-shaped smear, with a few trees flung head-down on the scarp. That red ran high up the hill of their refuge, damming back the little river, which had begun to spread into a brick-coloured lake. Of the village, of the road to the shrine, of the shrine itself, and the forest behind, there was no trace. For one mile in width and two thousand feet in sheer depth the mountain-side had come away bodily, planed clean from head to heel.

And the villagers, one by one, crept through the wood to pray before their Bhagat. They saw the barasingh standing over him, who fled when they came near, and they heard the langurs wailing in the branches, and Sona moaning up the hill; but their Bhagat was dead, sitting cross-legged, his back against a tree, his crutch under his armpit, and his face turned to the north-east.

The priest said: 'Behold a miracle after a miracle, for in this very attitude must all Sunnyasis be buried! Therefore where he now is we will build the temple to our holy man.'

They built the temple before a year was ended—a little stone-and-earth shrine—and they called the hill the Bhagat's hill, and they worship there with lights and flowers and offerings to this day.

But they do not know that the saint of their worship is the late Sir Purun Dass, K.C.I.E., D.C.L., Ph.D., etc., once Prime Minister of the progressive and enlightened State of Mohiniwala, and honorary or corresponding member of more learned and scientific societies than will ever do any good in this world or the next.

Summary -

The Miracle of Purun Bhagat' (The Second Jungle Book), was one of the most explicit attempts Kipling made to understand the relationship between the two worlds, free of the racial meaning implied in the opposition of East and West. But it achieves its impressive artistic effect by a fairy-tale perfection. For it deals with a man who leaves the life into which he was born and enters upon a new and challenging existence. Like Mowgli, Purun Bhagat is searching for the world to which he truly belongs, and it is his discovery of that world that is the old man's miracle.

The Miracle of Purun Bhagat is the story of an able administrator, Sir Purun Das, who as Prime Minister of a progressive princely state of India, builds roads, schools and hospitals in the state and becomes a favorite of the British. But when the time comes, he renounces the material world and becomes a wandering mendicant, finally settling down in a temple on a hill in the Himalayas. The people of the village down the slope call him 'Bhagat' and take care of his meager needs of food, water, etc. One night, a huge landslide brings the hillside rumbling down the slope, and the 'Bhagat' once again becomes a man of action and leads the entire population of the village down the slope and then up the adjoining hill, safe from The landslide.

Conclusion

This chapter has taken us on a journey through diverse narratives that showcase the rich interplay between Indian thought and English literature. From the ancient wisdom of the Panchatantra to the colonial-era tales of Rudyard Kipling, and the futuristic vision of E.M. Forster, we've explored how short stories serve as powerful vehicles for conveying moral lessons, cultural values, and societal critiques.

The Panchatantra demonstrates the enduring appeal of animal fables and their ability to impart universal wisdom. Kipling's *The Jungle Book* and *The Miracle of Purun Bhagat* offer unique

perspectives on the intersection of British and Indian cultures, while also exploring themes of belonging and self-discovery. Forster's *The Machine Stops* provides a thought-provoking critique of over-reliance on technology, resonating with both Western and Eastern philosophical ideas.

These stories not only entertain but also challenge us to think deeply about our place in the world, our relationship with nature and technology, and the values that guide our lives. They showcase how literature can bridge cultures, offering insights that transcend geographical and temporal boundaries.

Activity

1. Creative Writing Exercise: Choose an animal from one of the stories we've studied (e.g., Mowgli's wolf, Purun Bhagat's deer, or an animal from the Panchatantra). Write a short story (500-750 words) from this animal's perspective, incorporating a moral lesson or cultural value.

2. Comparative Analysis: Create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting two of the short stories we've studied. Focus on themes, cultural elements, and narrative techniques.

3. Modernization Project: Update one of the Panchatantra stories for a modern audience. How would you change the setting, characters, or conflict to make it relevant to contemporary issues while maintaining its core message?

4. Dramatic Interpretation: In small groups, choose a scene from *The Jungle Book* or *The Miracle of Purun Bhagat* to act out. Discuss how you would adapt the scene for a stage performance, considering aspects like dialogue, setting, and character portrayal.

Assessment / Know Your Progress

1. How does the structure of the Panchatantra contribute to its effectiveness in conveying moral lessons?

2. Analyze the character of Mowgli in *The Jungle Book*. How does he embody the tension between human civilization and nature?

3. Compare and contrast the themes of technology and human connection in *The Machine Stops* with traditional Indian philosophical concepts.

4. Discuss the significance of Purun Bhagat's transformation from a government official to a holy man in *The Miracle of Purun Bhagat*. What does this suggest about Kipling's view of Indian spirituality?

5. How do the short stories we've studied reflect the cultural exchange between India and Britain during the colonial era?

Glossary

1. Panchatantra: An ancient Indian collection of interrelated animal fables in Sanskrit verse and prose.

2. Fable: A short story, typically with animal characters, conveying a moral.

3. Bhagat: A term used in India for a holy person or religious devotee.

4. Jungle: A wild land overgrown with dense vegetation, often used as a setting in Kipling's work.

5. Mowgli: The protagonist of *The Jungle Book*, a feral child raised by wolves.

6. Anthropomorphism: The attribution of human characteristics or behavior to animals or objects.

7. Colonial literature: Literature produced during the period of European colonization, often dealing with themes of cultural clash and identity.

8. Dystopia: An imagined state or society in which there is great suffering or injustice, typically one that is totalitarian or post-apocalyptic.

9. Brahmin: A member of the highest Hindu caste, traditionally assigned to the priesthood.

10. Sunnyasi: A Hindu religious mendicant.

11. Barasingh: A large species of deer native to the Indian subcontinent.

12. Dharma: A key concept in Indian religions, referring to duty, righteousness, and cosmic order.

13. Maya: In Hindu philosophy, the illusion or appearance of the phenomenal world.

14. Karma: The sum of a person's actions in this and previous states of existence, viewed as deciding their fate in future existences.

15. Moksha: Release from the cycle of rebirth impelled by the law of karma.

16. Vedanta: One of the six orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy.

17. Upanishads: A collection of ancient Sanskrit texts that contain central philosophical concepts of Hinduism.

18. Bhagavad Gita: An ancient Indian text that is part of the epic Mahabharata, containing spiritual and philosophical teachings.

19. Langur: A long-tailed, arboreal Asian monkey.

20. Deodar: A species of cedar native to the western Himalayas.

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