

**A REVIEW ON THE SIMILARITIES OF THREE WORKS IN SANSKRIT
KATHĀ LITERATURE: VETĀLAPAÑCAVIṢATI,
SIṂHĀSANADVĀTRIMŚIKĀ AND ŚUKASAPTATI**

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Kathā Literature is a broad division of the narrative literature in classical Sanskrit. The *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana*, the two great epics in Sanskrit, symbolize a significant juncture of this literary tradition. The three Sanskrit compositions discussed in this paper, *Vetālapañcaviṣati*, *Siṁhāsanadvātrimśikā* and *Śukasaptati*, are considered as individual works. This research study was carried out as a comparative study where the structures and styles of the three aforesaid works were compared. Although those works have been written independently, it can be identified through a comparison of the works that there are a number of similarities among them. These similarities include the use of a frame story/main story and binding different sub-stories around the that, the expansion of the frame story for a particular length using sub-stories, the setting of each sub-story in a single structure, the telling of sub-stories by main characters and the finalizing of the whole work by returning to the frame story. Those similarities in terms of narrative structure cannot be seen in other famed works in the Sanskrit *Kathā* Literature. Besides, these three works have been titled in a similar manner, indicating the content and the quantity of the stories. Although the period and authorship of these books are still controversial, it can be imagined that they all have been written during a particular era perhaps with short gaps between each other. On the other hand, these writings assist us in identifying a new trend in the Sanskrit literature that prevailed after the 11th Century A.D. as per the comments made by critics. The specific narrative structure that appears in these three books differs from the structure of the *Pañcatantra* and the *Kathāsaritsāgara* but remains quite similar to that of the well-known Persian work *One Thousand and One Nights/The Arabian Nights*. Books composed in the same structure but in two different literary traditions in the world draw considerable attention. Accordingly, it can be said that they show an attempt to introduce some stories selected from ancient Indian sources and folktales through new narrative structures. The similarities in these works may have not been random circumstances but due to the influence they had on each other.

Keywords: Sanskrit Narrative Structure, Similarities, New Trend