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Exploring Symbiosis: A Critique of Anthropocentrism in Jack London's *The Call of the Wild* and E.B White's *Charlotte's Web*

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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By

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Declaration

I hereby declare to the best of my knowledge that this thesis is original; no part of it has been submitted earlier for the candidature of research degree to any university.

March 2021

Bhup Raj Joshi

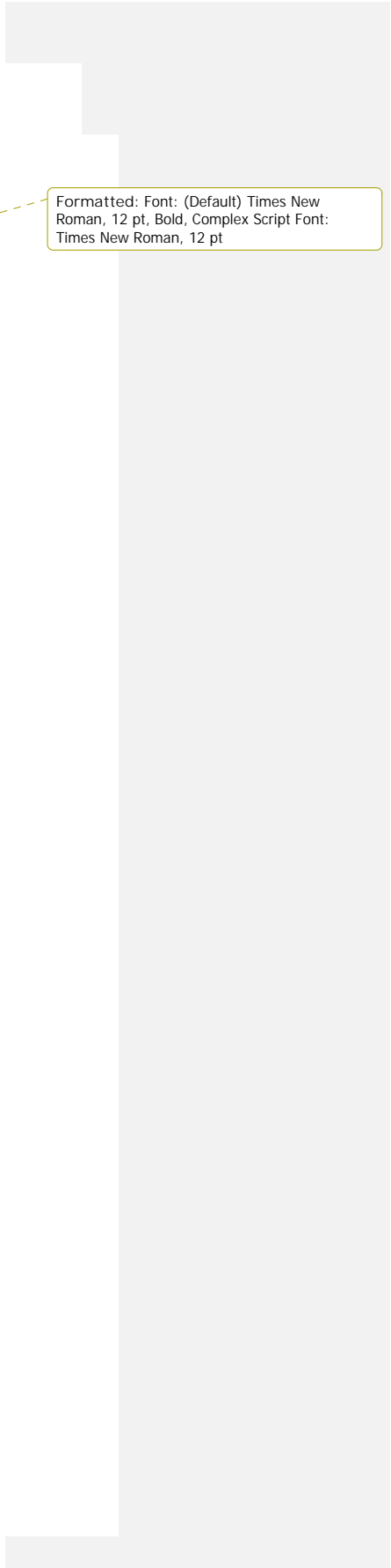
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Letter of Recommendation

Bhup Raj Joshi has completed dissertation entitled “**Exploring Symbiosis: A Critique of Anthropocentrism in Jack London’s *The Call of the Wild* and E.B.White’s *Charlotte’s Web***” under my supervision. He carried out his research from January 2019 to February 2021 carefully. I hereby recommend his dissertation for the viva voce.

Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota
Supervisor

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Abstract

This research work entitled “**Exploring Symbiosis: A Critique of Anthropocentrism in Jack London's *The Call of the Wild* and E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web***” explores the relationship between human beings and animals with the ecocritical lens. It finds a symbiotic relationship between the two species that leads the work to critiquing pervasive speciesism in human. The critical and theoretical insights used in this study are Peter Singer's equal considerations of interest, Charles Darwin's principle of common descent, David Schlosberg's idea of environmental justice and ecological justice, John Bruni's idea of kinship, Jacques Derrida's idea of relative existence and other philosophical, ethical as well as biological views of the scholars are special considerations of this research to critique human and nonhuman animal dichotomy and to bring out the state of symbiosis. The human and nonhuman beings appear in the contesting relation in the culture leading to the state of negation, exploitation, consumption and extinction. From wild to tamed, aquatic to terrestrial, small to the big, powerful to the powerless all nonhuman animals have to live defensive lives and humans always behave in offensive way against them. The discourse that human is endowed with prerogatives over the nonhumans is self-created. So, the rivalry between human and animal is a suicidal contest between culture and nature.

This research work attempts to address the questions: What is the original relation between human and nonhuman beings? How do the humans understand and behave with animals? Why do humans have such attitudes towards animals? How is human identity and existence shaped by animals and how can the symbiotic bonding between human and nonhumans be established for sustainable existence of all? - Human –animal relationship is shown through the study of the literary texts-*The Call*

of the Wild (1903) and the *Charlotte's Web* (1952) by Jack London and E.B White respectively. Jack London's *The Call of the Wild* exposes human behavior to animal community. It talks about the human purpose in keeping dogs and what do human beings think about other animals. The narrative shows dog's honesty and fellow-feeling towards its owner. The owner's maltreatment and commercial motives towards dogs are presented in the novel. As suggested above, the novel portrays Buck (the dog) as kept in a hostile manner by the owner and who only wants to sell it. E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* exposes how human beings are cruel to different livestock to satisfy their greed. It also presents how the animals demonstrate mutual help in order to save themselves from human attack. It also shows that animals are equally conscious of their safety as the other animals can show intra species integrity against external dangers. The growing human attitude from innocence to experience, friendly to unfriendly to animal is expressed in the novel to support the idea that human civilization runs on speciesism.

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I. Imagining Human-Animal Relations in *The Call of the Wild* and *Charlotte's Web*

This research work attempts to examine anthropocentric practices of human beings in the earth community through two seminal narratives, namely Jack London's *The Call of the Wild* (1903) and E. B. White's *Charlotte's Web* (1952) from eco-critical perspective with major focus on human animal relation, its need and problems in the primary texts. Human tends to exploit animals and other natural resources so as to satisfy their thirst for being powerful.

Exploitation of animals and nature cannot create conducive environment for better life because the welfare of them has consequential relations with the welfare of other species and non living things. Therefore, anthropocentric advances for mere happiness are ironical. Fulfilling their desires and gaining happiness through the manipulation and exploitation of the fellow creatures, human beings prove that they want to make cost-benefit analysis. Disrespecting the nonhumans and focusing on their personal transitory motives, suggest the long existing intellectual tradition of speciesism, the idea of human supremacy and superiority to the nonhumans.

The ecosystem of the earth is operated by the equal share and contribution of the all biotic and abiotic existence. The satisfaction or happiness of a species depends on equal consideration of the interests of all species but the reality of the situation is just the adverse. The human beings' self-centric activities in pursuit of their better life are suicidal in the long run. Although human beings and animals play complimentary roles and their relations have long history from the dawn of civilizations, the sense of human supremacy over the nonhumans has led rest of the creatures and environment.

The human discourses about animals and environment have defined, ruled and exploited animals. Human trend of getting material prosperity at the cost of the

exploitation of nonhuman existence has put them into danger. It has put the life of animals into great risk. The identity of human as superior to the animal and formation of the 'I' are based on the discriminatory human attitude. Because of the binary relation created by human civilization, the animals are othered and humans as 'self'. The existence of other species except the humans is considered as the object to satisfy the human desires. Guided by this chauvinism, human treatments to other species are selfish and cruel. But, this constructed dichotomy between human being and animals is based on the profit motive of humanity.

Egalitarian theorists like Ingemar Persson, Peter Vallentyne and Nik Holtug revisit the long existing human and animals' dichotomous relation and put all nonhumans into the state of equality. This earth is equally shared by nonhumans in terms of sustaining and running their lives. Peter Singer's idea of "Place for nonhumans" reminds the need of equal rights for all in the earth. He speaks for equality of all human and nonhumans, to mean that humans should consider the interest of animals to have pleasure and avoid pain. Charles Darwin and John Bruni's ideas do have the same egalitarian line of Singer. For them, humans and animals have certain natural proximity in terms of their evolution and biological development. But human attitude, behavior and principles are practiced on the animals and on the environment in a hostile manner. Therefore, this research work argues that human happiness is dependent on the realization of their harmonious relation with and respect to the rest of the world; and the effort in seeking happiness through exploitation of the animals is anthropocentric.

Human existence, identity and the happiness are intimately associated with the animals they live with. Human purpose of living in the world is guided, shaped and determined as per his/her association with the biotic and abiotic world around him.

Writers, such as Jack London and E.B. White are deeply concerned with the anthropocentric dealing in human animal relations. Jack London's *The Call of the Wild*, is about a kidnapped, domesticated dog that embraces his wild ancestry to survive and thrive in the wild. It explores how humans are dependent on dogs despite their commoditized position. Humans, as the owner of the dogs, exploit them just like the objects made for them. Buck, the dog is treated like a mechanically produced non sentient being. The owners do not respect his emotional and physical need. They cannot feel happiness in the happiness of Buck. While living with Judge Miller, with Manuel or with the gold explorers in Klondike, the dog does not feel much confidence and security and it reminds disharmony. Buck is relatively happier and content in Judge Miller's house but he lives there as a dignified slave. To live with the dignified state of Judge Miller is to become happier for Buck in comparison to latter miseries.

Trusting on the owner, Buck never expected to be sold and resold like a market commodity. But his getting sold and exploited to the extent of death exposes the cruel anthropocentric nature of human beings. His efforts to save from the physical pain due to the harsh beating of his masters' men are of no use. He has to face harsh situation wherever he is sold, bought and employed. He is not less conscious than human beings which can be substantiated not only from his interests to have pleasure, to have protection from the masters' maltreatment and his desire to avoid pain like human beings, but also from his human like traits of ruling others and having sympathy with his benevolent master at the end of the novel. Thus, *The Call of the wild* deserves to be studied from the egalitarian perspective.

The study explores in E.B. White's, *Charlotte's Web* how human being creates dichotomy with animals in order to keep them in dominant position and how they define animal to meet the human made standard. E.B. White's stance on the

vulnerability of the life of pig is not reasonable to substantiate the argument that all species of animals including human deserve equal right to life, pursuits of pleasure and avoiding pain. In the narrative, Arable wants to kill the newly born piglet on the ground of its abnormally small size. He expects it to be in the large size like other piglets but to his dismay, the pig does not meet his standard so he wants to kill it. The human supremacy over the animals gets exposed at Arable's attitude towards the pig, namely Wilbur. Like the children of Arable, the runt also has natural right to life. But it is at risk only being an animal; Wilbur is under the process of death.

Wilbur is guided by his interest to fulfill his desire to eat meat. Human civilization and maturity are featured with their cruelty and selfishness, towards animals. As an innocent child, Arable's daughter Fern, pleads her father not to kill the runt and she saves it. This is because of her innocent feeling and disinterestedness. It suggests that, the human trend to exploit the nonhumans develops along with their growth and maturity.

Human made parameters to judge animals are so strict that Arable sells Wilbur (Piglet) to Zukerman because it does not give satisfaction to the Arable family. Despite his daughter's innocent bondage to the pig, he sells it. For profit, Arable avoids Wilbur at the cost of his daughter's friendship. While dealing with the animal and nature; humans forget the sense of ethics and the organic value of others in the ecology and ecosystem. Wilbur, the pig and the spider, Charlotte are treated as others to serve their owners' interests whereas their title of 'master' is based on the existence of them. It echoes Derridian notion of relative existence and identity.

Animals are always born to die and suffer due to the sadistic vision of humans. A runty pig, Wilbur is destined to be killed. He is saved from the first master on the ground of cost benefit. This selfish interest of masters continues with the second

master, Zukarman, too. He loves and rears Wilbur in his barn for celebrating the New Year. Wilbur is saved from his master's plan with the support of the Charlotte, the spider but both Wilbur and Charlotte have to serve human interests in the fair. They are kept on the exhibition for the fun of young and the children. Their primary purpose is to please human beings by feeding or providing fun. The human characters in this case never feel the symbiotic relation with the fellow creatures.

The ecocritical reading of human animal symbiosis has been made on the basis of represented human and animal characters in the two novels. Primarily, ecocriticism means a theory of reading and writing about nature and the other species of nonhumans sharing and contributing to the ecosystem. It is not only the study of beautiful aspect, but the nature means whole of the physical environment consisting of humans and nonhumans. The interconnection between the two creates the harmonious bond and this is the major concern of eco criticism. In this connection, Cheryll Glotfelty defines: "[E]cocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and physical environment" (Introduction, XVII). To show the relation between biotic and abiotic existence in nature is the general purpose of ecocriticism. The basic of ecocriticism is relation between all species and the objects in the earth. An ecocritic Frederic Suresh defines ecocriticism in this way: "The modern ecological consciousness has the feeling that the balance between human and the natural world must be maintained. A perfect ecology is one in which plants, animals, birds and human beings live in such harmony that none dominates or destroys the other" (47).

His assumption is that the existence of all being is only possible if they regard to each other. But the human thirst for riches and thoughts of speciesism has been major cause of disharmony between the human and non human and that has resulted in ecological risks.

It provides a new insights to look into the biotic and abiotic relation in general and human-animals relation in particular. Along with this, the theory also touches upon the human traits in the animals and beastly behavior of human beings towards animals. Ecocriticism raises issues of symbiosis through different discourses. Arcadian Discourse speaks for the harmonious relationship between human and nature. It assumes that there is the interactive relation between both rather than dictative dominance of humans. The peaceful and equal existence of all organisms in the earth is the concern of Arcadian discourse. The Ecosystem Discourse focuses on the cyclical relation among humans and nonhumans. It says that there is the complementary connection among the earth communities. The phenomena of food production, water, climate and diseases control, maintenance of nutrition cycle and oxygen supply are included under green studies.

Likewise, the Environmental Justice raises the voice for the equal distribution of environmental benefit and hazards. As a discourse of ecocriticism, it proposes for equality and equal participation of all humans and nonhumans in the environmental protection and policy formation. Regardless of the class, race, culture, location and the origin, all the people in the earth deserve the rights and responsibility to bear benefit or loss from the environment. The Deep Ecological spectrum reminds of the intrinsic value of nature and deep connectivity of human with nature. It rejects sole dependence of humans on nature for utilitarian purpose but focuses on the issue of valuable entity of nature. There is equal role of human, plants and animals in nature, human must give up anthropocentric hubris and bring change in their thought patterns.

The Ecofeminist trend tends to compare women with nature. Women are dominated in male-centered society, so does the nature suffer from human

domination. Along with the subjugation to the exploiters, there are other proximities between women and nature like beauty, delicacy, tolerance and bearing new life. Both, nature and women worlds require freedom from domination and exploitation. The concern of environmental scientists is expressed in the Environmental Apocalypse Discourse. It pinpoints to the dark future of the earth due to rapidly degrading natural resources and hostile treatment of human towards nonhumans. It awakes humanity of unavoidable disasters through cautionary tales, literary imaginations and practical suggestions that envision the tragedy of the earth.

The ecocritical paradigm of analysis is not only of the environment and nature but also the animal studies. In the earth, the animals have equal role in the running cycle of ecology. But at the same time, exploitation of animals by the human civilization has come parallel. Domesticating animals is the first method used by humans to exploit animals. It is a process whereby population of animals or plants is selected for the benefit of humans. The domestication of plants is primarily for the aesthetic enjoyment in particular area and certain settlements, while those domesticated for larger-scale food production are generally called crops. Similarly, the animals kept for aesthetic or for house purpose are called pets while those reared for the purpose of food or works are called livestock.

Human trend of paying special consideration to their own interests is prevalent in the earth community since time immemorial. This attitude of human towards the animals and other non-humans is predominant speciesism of the western intellectual tradition. The Christian attitude is also speciesist in defining and treating with the animals. Aristotle sounds speciesist when he says, "Less rational has to serve more rational"(Korsgaard, 234). He means animal and plants are less rational and they have to serve the human being, a rational being. The Christian Saint, Paul rhetorically asks:

"Doth God Care for Oxen?" (Richard and Timothy, 256). By this he means that animals are not under the care of God as being irrational species. Among the multiple motives, one of the common purposes behind keeping animal and plants by human being is to use, to utilize and to consume them. While human beings consume them; they disrespect their rights to live and ignore the fact that they are also sentient beings. Theorist like Jacques Derrida, Peter Singer, John Bruni, and Charles Darwin question the anthropocentric vision towards nonhuman species. They show some ethical, biological and philosophical reasons about human relation with animals. According Derrida, animals are not only to serve humans but they are the human identity marker because human identity as 'I' exists in differential relations with the animals.

Derrida deconstructs the 'Logos' or the centre- 'human'. He questions Descartes' idea of human rationality that human being exists as a distinct in the form of 'I' because of his thinking power but Derrida, in his book, *The Animal that Therefore I am* opines that human as 'I' does not exist due to its mind but its binary relation with the animal (Derrida, x.). The western philosophers identify human what it is not, resounding Ferdinand de Saussure's idea of cat, when he says "A Cat is Cat because it is Not a Rat" (Saussure, 223). The existence and identity of a cat is derived from its differential relation with the rat. Similar is the case on the idea of human with the non human or the animals.

Derrida puts forward his symbiotic views with the refutation of another philosopher Gottfried Leibniz, who comes with the idea that a human is distinct being as it possesses the ethics. Sense of responsibility or morality makes a human unique species (Leibniz, 139). But as Derrida says, Leibniz's idea of human is not absolute. The underlying comparative is the nonhuman or the animal. This philosophy based on the dichotomy is exclusive. He says Lacan's philosophy of psychology theorizes the

human psychology or the state of mind, which is indirectly based on the comparison with animal's psychology. The idea of Heidegger about the human being in the earth is in relation to nonhumans. Derrida concludes that those philosophers on the ground of being exclusionary focus only on human mind, human responsibility, human psychology and human existence. They have excluded the animal world whereas their ideas are indirectly based on the binary relation with the animals. And, the definition and identity of human as 'central being' is incomplete in the absence of animals.

A critic of bioethics, Peter Singer comes with the idea of ethics in terms of human animal relation. He focuses on the respect of all animals. He shows the fault in human behavior and attitude towards animals that all human actions are guided by the cost benefit analysis. While making the principles about nonhuman species, humans always think from their perspective, which excludes the fellow beings.

But Peter argues that all animals are sentient as they have nervous system and psychic system. They have also subjective experiences of having pleasure and avoiding pain. So, human beings at least should have the sense of reverence for life of all animals.

In the similar line of ideas, John Bruni critiques the trend of creating human animal dichotomy on the biological base. His idea of kinship supports the logic that so called human superiority is against the biological proximity. For him, animals and humans biologically share certain features. It is the socialization process and environmental determinism that shapes one as human and other as animal. In some moments, human beings also come up with the beast like attitudes, traits and behavior as the animal shows the human traits. They are intelligent, co-operative, and goal-oriented and they have altruistic behaviors (Bruni, 23). In his article, "Fury Logic: Biological Kinship and Empire in Jack London's *The Call of the wild*", he equalizes

animals with humans in terms of getting angry or reactive to a hostile situation. The human desire to rule others and expand the empire is also represented by animals like dog. It signifies the proximity between human and animals.

Darwin's idea of naturalism in connection to the evolution of animals and humans suggests that the imperfection found in living beings and objects is clear evidence of natural process rather than the product of intelligent design. Human beings are not in the superior position on the basis of their intelligence but the way their predecessors selected a mode of evolution and the successors inherited them. Except this natural selection is the choices, all human and animal demarcations are cultural. In his "Theory of Evolution", Darwin posits that living organisms descend with modifications from the species that lived before them. Individuals within a population vary in their traits which are heritable and passed on to their offspring. He defines the differences among the species of the earth as natural ones, those who can modify, adapt and fit to the local condition will survive. The theory of Survival of the Fittest is applicable to animal characters in the primary texts.

The general concern of eco criticism and the views of the aforementioned theorists postulate the seminal idea of human animal affinity from ethical, biological and philosophical ways. To argue against the anthropocentric discourse about the animal species, such ideas form supportive parameters. Biodiversity is a natural phenomenon and bio unity among human, animal and plants is a necessity for the harmonious existence of the earth communities.

The Primary texts of this research, *The call of the wild* and *The Charlotte's Web* have been examined by a number of critics. Though; both the texts are interpreted as children literature, the issue raised have also elicited comments from various perspectives. *The call of the Wild* is an anthropocentric text. Some define it as

an exciting adventure of classic that should be read by the all American boys.

Relating with the American Dream, Raymond Beniot reads this narrative : “The myth of Buck, the great dog is an embodiment of the American Dream of escaping from the entangling complexity of modern living back”(1). Like the American dreamers, the dog turns wild and ambitious because he is fed up with the dominating environment of civilized masters. The American youths’ desire for freedom from the influence of white American culture echoes in the novel.

Through the Marxist lenses, Alfred Kazin interprets *The Call of the Wild* against capitalism: “London’s greatest desire was to slip backwards, away from capitalization, into the lustier and easier world of the primitive frontiers” (29). He seems to be tempted to the sociologists than capitalists and to the ideal past from real present. He projects the novel as an allegory of American industrialization and its effects on the American people. With the post colonialist and feminist tone, Bruni claims the novel: “an idea supported by the dog and wolf’s behavior with role activism plays in construction of masculine identity and the imperialist call for US expansion into new frontiers” (26). The efforts of the dog and that of the masters remind him male vigor and their journey to collect gold signifies the growing American thoughts to colonize and exploit the virgin land.

Pointing towards Jack London in *The Call of the Wild* an ecologist and psychologist, Elise V. Lemir in “Miscegenation: Making Race in America” opines: “Through the recorded history, judgments about people (and we can add about nonhuman species) have been made on the basis of visible and highly variable traits” (145-146). Lemir hints to the racial base of American history when he says visible and variable traits’. This trend of racist America is also represented in *The Call of the Wild*.

In the “Jack London’s Racial Lives: A Critical Biography,” Lennon pin points: “London’s works ,from his most popular, *The Call of the Wild* and *Martin Eden* ...is intent to flesh out his seemingly inconsistent racial politics” (148-149). Jack London’s racial philosophy, represented in the “Yellow Peril” a fear of Chinese people in America can be seen in his narratives like *The Call of the Wild*. The dog, Buck in the novel is of mixed breed. As the protagonist, the dog carries the racist ideology of the writer. The reference to Indian people in the jungle is supportive of his belief on the race. The novel signals to the racist violence, power and brute force. The narrative reminds of the American history of brutal exercise of power on the nonwhites.

Turning to the wilderness from human society of civilization, Buck inherits the idea of Rousseau. Richard Fusco, in the article “On Primitivism in *The Call of the Wild*” mentions:

Jack London’s *The Call of the Wild* traces one animal’s gradual reversion to its primordial instincts. During the course of novel the dog Buck experiences a gamut of life styles from civilization to apparent primitiveness. If a reader analyzes the story only superficially, he could erroneously conclude that London’s protagonist does indeed surrender totally to ancient urges. (2)

Rousseau’s idea of ‘back to nature’ is supported by the above lines. But it still retains traces of social advancement even in his final company of the wolf pack. He seems rather compromising than radical retreat to the original wilderness. His relation with the human until the last reminds of compromise between civilization and primitiveness, a requirement for his ideal political state. The novel has been interpreted as the text of romanticism, retaining the passionate love for life and nature. Tavernier Corbin attributes the novel’s enduring appeal to London’s passionate love

of life "*The Call of the Wild* is indeed a very romantic book, and Buck is a romantic hero. Despite his thick coat of fur, and perhaps because of it, the reader identifies with him easily and dreams through him of a world that is more beautiful, more just and more exhilarating"(4). The way Buck has been projected in the novel makes him a romantic hero. He deals with the masters in all four stages of his life with full spirit of romanticism. He is a victim of human domination but the zeal and high spirit even in the time of suffering make the text a romantic text.

E.B White's *Charlotte's web* written in 1952 primarily portrays the issues of life and death brought about by the First World War in the people. The post war situation was featured with much fear and uncertainty about death. So, the novel is interpreted as the exploration of vulnerability among the individual relationship filled with the sense of loss, fear and death. But that issue of war and its consequential frustration in humans has been secondary as there are more relevant issues of human animal relations. The theme of human-animal relation, human centered discourse about the pets draws our attention first in the novel.

In E.B.White's *Charlotte's web*, the projection of two worlds: human world and nonhuman world are the construction of so called human superiority to the animals. Fern's father and Zukerman's utilitarian attitudes and treatment to the runty pig, Wilbur exposes the two distinct world created by human imagination. On the other, the mutual co-operation and bondage of fellow-feeling in Wilbur, Charlotte and Templeton is there. This sense of fellow feeling and mutual respect to each other's life by the animals is great irony on the discriminatory selfishness of human being. As in *The Call of the Wild*, E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* has been examined through multiple theoretical lenses. The novel is primarily read and interpreted as the

children's literature, with the theme of love and life that emerge from the children's innocence. Frances Maib writes:

Charlotte's Web will be better understood and appreciated by third or fourth grader than by younger children. It fits one or more of the basic needs of children, namely the need to be loved, the need for aesthetic satisfaction, the need to find out about the world in which we live, need for change, the need to achieve and need for security.(6)

The growing need and psychology of the growing children requires physical and psychosocial support for their positive development and transformation, which is addressed by this novel. It contains the sense of live and life for the children. But the need for love, security, satisfaction all is not merely needed for human children as they are equally essential for the animal's children. Like the innocence of human child, the animal also is full of innocence. So, the novel can be better interpreted as the human animal relations from the egalitarian point of view.

The novel is also read as the book of coming of age because the main character starts as a kid, and grows up over the course of the story. There are two characters that we see growing from young to older: Fern and Wilber. The development in the plot goes hand in hand with the development of those characters from early life to maturity.

II. Theorizing Human-Animal Reciprocity in *The call of the Wild* and *Charlotte's Web*

The distinction between human and nonhuman is the outcome of social development or the development of human civilization to some extent, though there are some seminal differences between the two species. Along with the passage of time, the discourses about the primacy of human civilization have also been constructed. So, the discourse of human as superior and nonhuman as inferior has to do with the power relations. Human species as the centre of power creates knowledge by defining animal as the secondary species of the being.

This strategy or human trend has been into practice since time immemorial or the time when human species appeared in the earth. But this binary of human animal is less logical, artificial and superficial. Upon the closer and deeper analysis, the human-animal have remarkable proximity in terms of the origin, evolution, psychological and physical variables. Human association with animals goes far back to the prehistoric time as Giorgio Agamben argues:

And in general, in the ancient regime the boundaries of men are much uncertain and fluctuating than they will appear in the nineteenth century after the development of the human sciences. Up until the eighteenth century, language which would become man's identifying characteristic par excellence-jumps across orders and classes, for it is supposed that ever birds can talk. (24)

Agamben's argument for human animal relation asserts that previously the boundaries of distinction were not drawn fixedly and that it is the human science that has segregated animals. His indication of the birds' ability to use language supports the symbiotic relation between human and animal. Therefore, there is the synthetic

relation between the two species. Their traits are overlapping and adjoining that can make us conceptualize the two sides of the same coin.

It is the human being who has established and exposed that inseparable relation as distinctly separate one. The self-centered and cruel human nature has put the animal aside with the aim of exploiting, ruling and dominating purpose. This rather abnormal gap in the human-animal relation can be proved unreasonable or at least can be filled with the sociological, philosophical, ethical and biological inferences.

As the member of a community, animals share some feature with the humans in their instinct and behaviors. They are common to the human in many respects which bring the human-animal communicates together in the complimentary role. In the *Origin of Species*, (1859), Charles Darwin comes with the scientific idea that the creatures evolve over the ages through natural selection. He highlights on the evidence of "common descent" of the species through the branching pattern of evolution. The origin of all human and animal species was the same and it was in the long course of generation that brought the divergence and hierarchy among those species in the earth.

He argues that all lives on the earth come from a common ancestry and thus all living things are related to other living things and when the new living things are created, there is a potential for manifestation of novel traits. Relating human-animal proximity, Darwin puts forth: "Besides love and sympathy, animals exhibit other qualities connected with the social instinct which in us would be called morality"(183). He pre-supposes that like human beings, the animals also possess the inner traits of love and sympathy which are defined as the exclusive human qualities according to the anthropocentric world view.

The reciprocity of these similar traits put human and nonhumans together. He further shows the low origin of humans if the animal is considered with so: "We must however, acknowledge as if it seems to that, man with all his noble qualities...still bears in his bodily frame in indelible stamp of his lowly origin"(76). The trend of modern human beings to prove them superior with the higher origin can be questioned with this idea of same descent of the human and animals. As the visible differences of them are the result of evolution with the slightest verification in course of generations, none can be justified superior or inferior species in terms of the origin.

Showing the connection of human and animal, Darwin's idea of "common descent" is explicit in the following lines from his *Origin of Species*: "Man in his arrogance thinks himself a great work, worthy of the interposition of deity. More humble, and I believe truer to consider him created from animal"(220). He views that the superficial superiority of human equalizing to the God is merely human-centered discourse created for the domination and exploitation of the animals. With the passage of time and process of human civilization, the animals were made the inferior object of human end. Therefore, preference to the human as the distinct species in the dichotomy of human and nonhuman is false.

The logic about sentience to be equal in the human and in animals, as said by Peter Singer, is clear from the Darwinian concept too. Human alone cannot be greater than the animals on the basis of ability to feel: "There is no fundamental difference between man and animals in their ability to feel pleasure and pain, happiness and misery"(308). It marks the presence of necessity of reciprocity of the inner traits in both of the species. The power of judgment on the basis of pleasure and pain is inherited by every individual being. So, Darwin's idea about the origin of species is

inclusive and equality-based. He interprets it in his taxonomy of branching pattern of evolution.

The earth is shared by various species and they contribute to smooth running of ecosystem of the earth. But human species' activities are bullying to the status of nonhuman. Peter Singer's idea of equality and equity proposes the respect to the animal's position and role from ethical-moral point of view. For him animal and human have interconnected similarities:

Vertebrate animals have nervous system broadly similar to our own and behave in ways that resemble our own pain behavior when subjected to stimuli that we would find painful; so the influence that vertebrates are capable of feeling pain is reasonable one, though not as strong as it is if limited to the mammals and birds...As for plants, though there have been sensational claims that plants are not only conscious but even psychic, there is no hard evidence that supports even the more modest claims.(57)

Singer extends bio-physical consideration to the nonhumans including plants. They reciprocate the physical makeup of the body along with the overlapped sensory perceptions. His idea of plants' psychology is interesting to support nonhuman position with the humans. The construction of human and animal body, function of those body parts and their sensitivity in maintaining the life of them are based on the similar theory of biology. That is why, the proximity of animals to human is reasonable.

To bridge the artificial gap of human-animal, Singer comes up with the further idea of living dual life at the same time. He assumes the animal life within the human life: "All I have to do is imagine myself living simultaneously the lives of both myself and other being, experiencing whatever the two beings experience"(60). This quote of

Singer marks the inter subjectivity of the two species. Human would cease to live if he thinks for exclusionary living. This suggests, just as non conscious beings have no interest, their life lacks intrinsic value. Both physical and ethical values are incomplete in the lack of reciprocal understanding between human and animals.

The presence of human nature in animals can be substantiated with the idea of John Burroughs in "Human Traits in the Animals":

That there is a deal of human nature in the lower animals is a very obvious fact; or we may turn the proposition around and say with equal truth, that there is a deal of animal nature in us humans. We are all made up of stuff, the functions of our bodies are particularly the same, and the working of instincts and our emotional and involuntary natures are in many ways identical: Bundle of instincts, impulses, predilections, race and family affinities and antagonisms. (37)

The interchangeability of the instincts like love, emotions and anger bring both of the species together. The involuntary nature of human's means the angry, emotional, sentimental or sudden abnormalities which are generally associated to animal's traits, prevails in the civilized human beings too. By the use of reason, they try to deter or postpone anger and prejudice. However, they cannot get rid of it as it is the inborn nature. There are certain other features that human share with the animals-curiosity, jealousy, joy, sex, maternal and paternal instinct, the instinct of fear, of self-preservation and so forth.

Against the claim about reasoning power of humans, Burroughs equalizes them showing their unreasoning and uncontrollable instinct like that of the animals: "Our blind, unreasoning animal anger is excited by whatever opposes or baffles us. Of course, when we yield to the anger, we do not act as reasonable being but as the

unreasoning animals. It is hard for one to control this feeling when in opposition comes from some living creature" (39). The speciesist thought that only the human being is able to become reasonable and gentle is proved false from the aforementioned conclusion. Regardless of the categories, the causal expression of the original nature by all is inevitable phenomenon. In such situation, human and animal both are subjected to submission. If the appearance and disappearance of the instinctual but unintentional behaviors are conditioned by the external stimulants, no species can escape it because the external factors are equally applicable to them. So it can be argued that the distinction of human-animal can be identical in real sense.

Whether the animal behaviors are purely natural or cultural is an issue of debate created by human beings with the purpose to rule and exploit them but originally they have the possibility of "kinship" as said by Jack London. In *The Other Animals* (1908):

You must not deny your relatives, the other animals. Their history is your history, and if you kick them to the bottom of the abyss you go yourselves. By them you stand or fall. What you repudiate in them, you repudiate in yourself, a pretty spectacle, truly of an exalted animal striving to disown the stuff of life out of which it is made, striving by use of the very reason that was developed by evolution to deny the process of evolution that developed it. This may be good egotism, but it is not good science. (120)

Aligning with Darwin's idea of "common descent" for human and animals, London asserts the shared biological kinship above. It questions the political motives of human to maintain difference between human and animals. A pet in the family has historical attachment with the humans, so it should be treated as the family member.

Moreover, the innocent and carefree life of the animals is adaptable for human happiness as wished by Ralph Waldo Emerson:

I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-
contain'd;
I stand and look at them long and long.
They do not sweat and whine about their condition;
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins;
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God;
Not one is dissatisfied—not one is demented with the mania of owning things;
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago;
Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole earth. ("I Think I Could
Turn and Live with Animals")

However, human being denies the historical evolution of mutuality which has developed the human reason too.

The idea of kinship erases the power relations that shape the associations between dogs, whether pets or working dogs and their owner/masters. Contextualizing the idea of biological kinship with *The Call of the Wild*, John Bruni states:

The biological kinship is between human and animal, which will later produce the dog as a companion species. As *The Call of the Wild* grows stronger, Buck's dream vision becomes more frequent and more vivid picture of shared emotional responses between early humans and dogs emerges. (39)

The inner responses of the dog, Buck are exposed out according to the need of the situation. The animal's reaction to the outer environment shares the early human features of unrefined behaviors. This instinctual and biological dependency bridges the difference between the human and nonhumans. But the biological kinship, primal

unity between human and the beast gets disturbed mainly due to the lapses in human relationship displayed in the attitude of Thornton's party. The primal unity of human and animal gets into clash due to interest in gold.

The history of human animal relation is primarily logo centric that defines human as the 'logos' and animal as the 'margin'. Human, with the special privileges over animal, is logo centric or keeps centre seeking tendency. This attitude and behavior of human is based on the binarism. The concept of 'self and other' is the seminal feature of whole western metaphysics that perceives looks and interprets the existence of the things in differential relation. In *The Animal that Therefore I am*, Jacques Derrida deconstructs the 'Logos' or the centre (human). As the entire western metaphysics is about human -human mind (rationality), human responsibility (ethics), human existence (being) or the human psychology, it is exclusionary because all of Rene Descartes, Levinas, Heidegger or Lacan have othered nonhuman. They talk about human in differential relation with the animals.

When they define, discuss and prioritize human ethics, human existence, human psychology or human rationality, they separate human from animal. So, their philosophies have no space for the animals. Similar to Derrida's definition of a cat as "a cat is a cat because it is not a rat", their definitions go in a negative course to define human by negating animal – 'what human is not' rather than what it is. Taking the importance of animals into consideration, he says that the absence of animal, a binary part the philosophies of mind, mortality and the condition of being, they are incomplete. And the generalization of hundreds of animals' species only to the single animal is questionable.

With reference to the binarism in philosophies, Derrida tries to justify human existence conditioned by the nonhuman or the animal existence:

The animal is there before me, there close to me, there in front of me – I who am (following) after it. And also therefore, since it is before me, it is behind me. It surrounds me and from the vantage of this being- there before- me it can allow itself to be looked at, no doubt but also, but also – something that philosophy perhaps forgets, perhaps being this calculated forgetting itself – it can look at me. It has its point of view regarding me. (380)

Derrida portrays the human existence of "I" to have been determined by the presence of the animal. Human is surrounded by the animal in terms of giving the meaning to it. The differential relation with the animal is the way to derive existential, rational, psychological distinctness of human, though the western philosophers have ignored it. He posits that just like the human being has perspective to look into, to define, to behave with the animal, they also possess the same perspective for the similar purpose. Therefore, the similar purposes have identical outlooks in human and animals that justify the interdependence of existence.

There is not as vast difference as the anthropocentric discourses show about the human- animal population. The word, 'animal' originally denotes positive sense to mean 'having breath' but the human behavior and practice on it connotes negative sense. The connotation of the word is problematic. At this point, Derrida puts forward: "The animal! What a word! The animal is a word, it is an appellation that men have instituted, a name they have given themselves the right and the authority of give to the living others"(23). Derrida bridges the gap between human and animal with the above logic. For their convenience to preserve more rights and authority over the animals, human have coined the term, 'animal.' Otherwise, the linguistic signifier is not discriminatory or derogatory in it. Therefore, it is the problem of human mentality and intention that puts the species apart.

This earth is already shared by a number of living and nonliving species before the speciation of human beings. This heterogeneity of the species is the fundamental feature of the earth's creation. And the organizations of the relations of those species are the regulatory facts of the world ecosystem since its genesis. In this connection, Derrida argues: "Beyond the edge of so called humans, beyond it but by no means on single opposing side, rather than "The Animal" or animal life, there is already a heterogeneous multiplicity of the living or more precisely a multiplicity of organization of relations. Their relations are at once intertwined and abyssal and they can never be objectified" (31). The organic concept of the living and nonliving, human and animal in the formation of the earth is supported by Derrida in the above mentioned lines. The human-animal relations are organized in such way that they cannot be measured, speculated by the superficial anthropocentric efforts. The depth of this interconnectivity denotes the deep ecology which believes that all living things have intrinsic value and that human have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital human needs. The symbiotic existence in the earth is presupposed and praised in the *Vedic* tradition. In *Prithivi Sukta*, The earth mother receives eulogy for sharing and caring the lives of various animal communities: "The serpent, the scorpion with thirsty fangs. . .thy forest animals, wild animals homed in the woods, the men eating lions and tigers that roar, the wula, the wolf. . ." (hymn 46-49). It aligns with the modern western egalitarian theories about animal and that they deserve rights to their lives equal to humans.

One of the charges of human to the animal is about their voicelessness and lack of responding. The man supposes that animals should be put into second category because they are not endowed with ability to produce language. They cannot show any linguistic reaction to the situations. Nor do they have the ability to understand the

voice. This is another manipulative discourse of human being to carry on their dominance. A Roman philosopher, porphyry of Trye refutes: "Not an animal's unaware of the voice of humans, whether the humans are angry or friendly or calling, whether the voice is hunting or wanting something, or giving something, in short whatever it is doing to everyone they respond appropriately, they respond to everything in an appropriate manner"(85).

Like the human being they are attentive to understand and show response to the situation. The animals also have the sense of fear and love that they internalize through the external happenings. They reciprocate the feature with humans in the use, recognition and reaction to the human voices.

To sum up, human experience is not unique. The forces like competitiveness and cooperation, which are evolutionary elements in human, are also found in animals. The universal human instinctual and emotional features like love, violence, anger, jealousy, and sexual drives work in the animal too. The behaviors and cognitive capacities of both of the species are similar. Therefore, the collision of identical traits of them is just like the rivalry between the siblings. The psychological, biological, cognitive and emotional faculties of human and animal function in the identical way except the complexities in human behaviors and thoughts caused by their cultural history.

III. Critiquing Human-Animal Dichotomy in *The Call of the Wild* and

Charlotte's Web

Human beings have always tried to prove their superiority on the basis of certain discourses. The whole human civilization is led by the hubris that they occupy the primary position on the earth, so they deserve special privileges than the nonhumans. They define the rest of the animals subjectively but that definition is always biased, dominating and rather exploitative. In doing so, humans ignore that the existence of all in the earth has been possible due to the mutual roles of humans and nonhumans. Despite this reality, the nonhuman species have always been victim of anthropocentric belief of humans, which is a mere illusion in terms of their formative roles in the ecosystem.

The privileged position of human in the earth is dependent on the binary between the animals and humans that is guided by the selfish motives. The creation of binary of human and animal with the aim of exploitation is unjust and unethical in the context of environmental and ecological justice. The theory of environmental and ecological justice claims that all human and nonhuman species have equal rights to live in the free and fair nature in the earth. The pleasure and pains, loss and benefits should be shared equally by the living and nonliving beings of the earth. David Schlosberg defines ecological Justice as: "ecological justice, focused on the relationship between those human communities and the rest of the natural world"(3). Going beyond John Rawl's distributional justice, Schlosberg is concerned with doing justice to the nature which includes the living and nonliving beings or the human and animals, but the human activities are not justful to the animals and the rest of the nature. In *The Call of the Wild*, human characters are allured by the material motives turning them hostile to the pets.

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Buck, the dog is living happily with carefree life in the Californian Santa Clara Valley as the story opens. It is kept as the pampered pet of rich Judge Miller and his family. But this happiness does not go longer when the dog is stolen away by Manuel: "Buck was stolen from his peaceful life in the sun-kissed valley of Santa Clara and carried away to the rough northern gold mining country where he had many masters" (7). The beginning situation of Buck is filled with joy in the beautiful valley. His being stolen from there signifies the profit motive treatment of human being. Selling him as an object to utilize is keeping him in the secondary position. Like Manuel, Buck also feels to live happily with the Judge Miller but to his dismay, all happiness is snatched away by the human. In this episode, the idea of ecological justice gets violated by the dichotomous attitude of Manuel towards the dog. The pleasure entertained by the dog is not considered by the human being.

While showing such behaviors of cruelty to the Buck, neither Manuel nor even the Judge thinks that their existence of pleasure and privilege are the co-existent of the dog. They take their privileges absolutely without giving equal consideration to that of the Buck. In this connection, Peter Singer's idea is worth mentioning:

One being is intelligent then another does not entitle him to enslave, exploit or disregard the interests of the less intelligent being. The moral basis of equality among humans is not equality in fact but the principle of equal consideration to interest and it is this principle that, in consistency, must be extended to any nonhumans who have interests. (57)

Singer highlights that the discrimination and domination of humans on the nonhumans or the animals appears from the lack of equal consideration and respect to the animals. When humans make policies and behave with the animals, they forget the value of subjective experience of other sentient beings. They have the common

interest in experiencing pleasure and avoiding pain. The consciousness or capacity to experience is to be respected, but *The Call of the Wild* lacks the principle of equality to the animals that causes the objectification of the Buck. Although, he likes to sit around the fire with the owner, Judge, he is compelled to give up because of Manuel's interference with his pleasure. His feeling of pain is not paid any heed by the children of the Judge. They tease and poke Buck.

Moreover, Miller's son rides on Buck to meet his anthropocentric desires. They play with him for their pleasure: "It's our turn, Daddy . . . I will trust Buck whenever he is with you. He is a gentleman . . . and he would protect you with his life."(8). All the children of Judge fulfill their desires of happiness by riding and torturing the dog. The Judge also has taken it as an obedient and subservient pet. So, he trusts Buck that it will protect his children in his absence, too. Despite of this obedience and submissive nature of the dog, his masters and the children are always cruel and self-centered towards the dog.

The system of creating dichotomy between human and animal, and valorizing the first one goes back to the western intellectual tradition. Immanuel Kant, lecturing on ethics, considered the question of our duties to animals and gave his opinion in a biased way: "So far as animals are concerned, we have no direct duties. Animals are not self-conscious and are there merely as means to an end. That end is man" (56). Kant's idea of ethical duties of human towards animals sounds exploitative. He defines and limits them to a utilitarian purpose for humans. In the similar tone, the subject in the novel, *The Call of the Wild* goes ahead. With the purpose of collecting gold from Klondike, North Canada, men wanted the dog: "Searching in Northern darkness for gold, men wanted dogs...heavy dogs with strong muscles for work and with furry coats for warmth find me a dog. A big one, who can work and pull his

weight, I will pay plenty"(9). In this quotation, the purpose of the strong dogs like Buck is to fulfill the need of human beings to collect material property. Buck, as the hybrid of St. Bernard and Scotch Shepherd, is preferred by the gold extractor. There was a type of competition among the people for satisfying their thirst for gold which put the interest and conveniences of the dogs into secondary position whereas they deserve the equal consideration.

The arbitrary distinction between human and animal is analogous to the binary of black and white race, when the blacks were put into the low grade humans. This distinction was racist to privilege the whites. The moral concern of the whites about the blacks were only limited to their white race. In this connection, Peter Singer opines: "The point remains true if "species" is substituted for the 'race'. The logic of racism and the logic of position we have been discussing, which I have elsewhere referred to as "speciesism" are indistinguishable and if we reject the former than consistency demands that we reject the latter two"(57). Singer means to say that the black people were dominated and exploited by the whites without respecting their sentiments. The treatment of the whites towards blacks was guided by the 'racism' just like the treatment of the humans towards animals is guided by the 'speciesism'. This trend of giving priority and privileging humans can be further substantiated in the following lines of *The Call of the Wild*: "Manuel needed money. He had a wife, many children and loved to gamble"(9). For getting the money to feed his children, to his wife, Manuel plans to steal and sell the dog. He is so self-centered that he even wants to play gambling by selling the dog. It represents the human desire to meet their personal interest at the cost of the animals. As a rational being, Manuel could have thought about the comfort and discomforts of the dog before selling it. Buck was a pet, which could have been treated equally to his children.

Lack of the sense of fellow-feeling towards Buck is the reason that leads an obedient pet to the complete wilderness. The dog, getting fed up with all inhuman behaviors, finally turns to be a wolf. Buck's returning to the beastlike state refers to the human characters' othering attitudes towards the animals. The maltreatment of his masters takes the dog so far that he is compelled to quit human company. Due to the othering mentality of the owners, the relationship between humans and the dog becomes hostile. At the railroad station, when Buck is carried away with the rope, Manuel and the stranger show their cruelty. Mercilessly, Manuel sells Buck to the man. This cruel human nature to the nonhumans can be referential to the idea of Thomas Aquinas in *Thomistic Principle and Bioethics*:

Plants exist for the sake of animals, and animals for the sake of man. Even charity does not extend to "irrational creatures; for among other things they are not included in the fellowship or everlasting happiness. We can love animals only if we regard them as this good thing that we desire for others," that is to God's honor and man's use. (56)

In this statement, Aquinas' anthropocentric views objectify the animals. He merely interprets animal having no rationality. So, they have only the utilitarian value to make the human happy, to honor the God and to be used by the humans. This degeneration of animal value ironically degenerate human value since there is no absolute existence of any species in the earth.

The Call of the Wild sustains degenerating effects of the Buck: "To Buck's surprise the rope was pulled tight around his neck, choking him...angry he sprang at the man. But he was met half way, grabbed by the throat, and thrown over on his back"(11). This event takes origin from Manuel's stealing Buck from the Judge Miller. Had he not become so selfish to steal and sell the dog, both the dog and human

would have remained peaceful with their normal nature and relations. But it is the maltreatment of the men that makes Buck angry to loss its temper. Getting furious was not the original condition neither of the dog nor of the men. But tying the rope tightly to the extent of choking compels the dog to become offensive which further results into man's anger at dog.

Physical torture by exploiting the animal or by giving pain by the human being lies at the heart of *The Call of the Wild*. It is sadistic nature of human that they take pleasure at the displeasure of their fellow creatures. The human characters misuse their so called rationality claiming that they have prerogative. This dichotomy with dominating purpose is seen in the following lines of the novel: "Buck listened to all this while suffering. He attempted to face them but thrown down and choked repeatedly until they filed the heavy brass collar off his neck. After the rope was removed, Buck was flung into a crate that looked like a cage. He lay there for the rest of the night nursing his anger and wounded pride" (11). The above situation shows that Buck was undergoing intolerable pain when Manuel and the strange man were dealing about the cost benefit from the dog. They both were happy to fulfill their needs by selling and buying Buck whereas the dog had been physically and psychologically wounded. At this pain of the Buck, they were just observer having no empathy. At the new house with the new masters, the suffering of Buck by the torture of humans got worse for him. The masters' men laughed at his misery. They poked him with the sticks. He clamped down on those sticks until he realized that was exactly what they wanted.

The advocates of animal rights propose for the anti-cruelty and animal welfare. Like the human being, nonhuman also should be endowed with certain

inalienable fundamental rights to life, food, free and fair movement in the nature. In this connection, Tom Regan points out that:

We are sometimes justified in causing nonhuman animals' significant pain in pursuit of institutionalized human interests; animal rightists deny that we are ever justified in doing this. The true objective, for which animal advocates should work, according to this view, is not to provide nonhuman animals with larger cages and stalls, but to empty them. (68)

The spirit of this idea of Regan is to define animal right practically by freeing them from the human confinement and providing them with the basic needs. Judging *The Call of the Wild* in this framework of Regan, it can be inferred that Buck is deprived of its natural rights. It can be substantiated with the evidence from the text:

For two days and nights, the cart was dragged along by other locomotives. Buck was given no food or water. He did not mind the hunger so much, but the lack of water made his anger reach frenzy. The bad treatment was only made worse by his thirst. The men did not care. They teased him. They barked and growled at him, which caused him to react. (13)

Maltreatment to the Buck by the men during their mission to Klondike is highlighted in the above lines. As the right to live, right to have living substance and considered to be the basic human rights in the case of human beings, the dog, Buck also deserves those rights but he was deprived of those that led the condition towards disaster. This event in the mission to collect gold reminds of the money oriented exclusive attitude of human beings in terms of behaving with the nonhumans.

Buck is unable to communicate his feelings, pains and desires with the tormentors. He cannot produce the human sound to share the things though he definitely had his own language. But there was none to listen and respect his voice of

misery. Differences in the way of communication do not mean that they do not communicate. In this regard Joyce E. Chaplin puts forward his idea: "We do not know whether animals are like us, and may never know, and it should not matter. Animals may think (and therefore speak) in ways we may never comprehend, but this does not mean we should not respect them, or any other nonhuman parts of nature" (523). Chaplin means to say that the language of human being may not always be useful to understand the animal's inner thoughts and desires. Despite of their language, the human vocal and verbal standard of language does not consider others' language. The animals also speak in their own way but in the case of *The Call of the Wild*, human beings turn inconsiderate to know the unspoken language of the Buck. It is the evidence of human trend to ignore the nonhuman which can be shown the time when the dogs Dave, Spitz and Buck meet. They communicate with each other: "The first time he met Buck, he smiled in friendly manner while stealing the food from Buck's bowl"(19). Their language was explicitly clear for each other but the humans never understood as they do not feel it the need.

In the novel, the dogs including Buck, Spitz, Dave and Curly have only instrumental value. When they are taken to the North as sled-dogs, they lose both value of their life and liberation. The importance of their life is only limited to the utilitarian purpose for gold miners. It makes them sacrifice their remaining freedom. Highlighting these essentials for the animals, Eric Katz makes his comment: "An animal liberation ethic considers as morally relevant certain properties of the animals themselves – e.g., sentience-rather than merely the relationship the animals have to morally "superior" autonomous humans. Animals have intrinsic or inherent value based on some aspect of their existence and not simply an instrumental value for humans" (89). Katz marks that the value of animals' life is equal to the human life

from ethical point of view too. But the loss of this ethical consideration in humans has degraded the inherent value of the animals. The degradation of the intrinsic animal value is resulted from the lack of moral ethical consideration. As a result, the animals have to suffer which can be supported with the killing of Curly and harming Buck:

Francois carrying an ax approached the dogs. Two minutes from the time Curly went down to the time the last dog was clubbed of, she lay there dead, her body torn to pieces...before Buck could recover from Curly's brutal killing, he received another shock. Francois fastened a harness on him. Buck had seen harness fastened to horses at Judge Miller's. (22-23)

From the above events, it can be inferred that dogs were beaten and even killed by the owners like the Curly. Similarly, they were deprived of the freedom. Buck getting harnessed and fastened symbolizes the lack of freedom from human beings. Francois worked as the controller of the life of Buck. The club and fang with him are symbolic for the tyranny of human towards the animals.

The dichotomy between Francois, Perrault (humans) and the Buck, Dave, Spitz (the animals) is not much reasonable in terms of the struggle they make for their survival in the hostile northland. It was environmentally adverse for all the gold miners as there was the deep snow covered the whole land and falling from the sky. But the struggle for the sled-dogs was doubly dangerous because they had to pull the cart amid geographical adversities. It was a risky life of the dogs to adjust to that condition for their survival. In *The Call of the Wild*, Buck's determination to become a lead-dog is analogous to human spirit. He does not merely want to survive; he wants dominate and rule over the rest of the dogs: "Highly as the dog driver had valued Buck, with his two devils, he found, while the day was young that he had undervalued. At the bound Buck took up the duties of leadership and when judgment

was required, and quick thinking and quick acting, he should himself a superior even of Spitz of whom François had never seen and equal" (83). The presumed human instinct to rule over others, to gain power can be found in the above mentioned narratives of the text. Buck tries not only to impress and win the heart of the masters in journey but also ambitious for defeating his fellow sufferer dogs. So, the inheritance of human traits in the protagonist, Buck blurs the anthropocentric boundary between human animal worlds.

In connection to the ambition to gain power and to rule over other being, William Salter comes up with the Nietzschean idea that life is constant struggle either to rule or to get rid of the rule. The "will to power" is the agency where mans owe a master or slave. And presence of this "will" questions the conventional system of morality of ethics (384). This idea can be related to the Buck in *The Call of the Wild*. The undeclared or indirect type of competition of Buck with the humans is filled with "pride" and he is looking for victory. From his clash for leadership, we can sell him as the "masterful dog." His nature is never found to be dominated. When he is clubbed, he thinks for the way out of it and to have the mastery among the circle even in the unfavorable setting. So, the possession and performance of human features by the dogs in general and Buck in particular have made *The Call of the Wild* more inclusive.

In response to the issue of human superiority to the animal, *The Call of the Wild* can be substantiating enough to prove that animal is equally competent and rational. In some case, the self-created discourse of human superiority in different sense comes to be ironical. Because the campaigner masters of the dogs including Buck seem dependent on them. In search for gold for material prosperity, human beings alone cannot sustain their superiority among the dogs. Sometimes, animals can

replace their assumed privileged position. Abhram Rothberg explores Jack London's view towards human and animals characters in this context:

London was not only treating animals like human being, but treating human beings like animals, recognizing essential differences between man and animal. In *The Call of the wild*, he equated man with dogs and wolf; and equated with the harness of trial with the harness of society, implying that force, savagery and cunning were equally the ways to success in both areas.

(1)

Rothberg attributes the reciprocity of human-animal traits in London's narrative. Animals are presented physically active and mentally conscious enough. In *The Call of the wild*, London presented civilized human-like quality and consideration in the wolf and the Buck. In terms of reasoning power, the dogs have qualified themselves to accept human-like consciousness and foresightedness to challenge the human superiority in the hierarchy. In some cases, human beings lose their control in rationality and degrade to the level of animal; and the animals upgrade to the level of human. So, this type of context to sustain and prove the underlying qualities which exist interchangeably in both of the species is the foundation of *The Call of the wild*:

But when the ends of the rope were placed in the stranger's hand, he growled menacingly. He had merely intimated his displeasure in his pride believing that to intimate was to command. But to his surprise, the rope tightened around his neck, shutting off his breath. In quick range, he sprang at the man, who met him half way, grappled him close by the throat, and with deaf twist threw him over on his back. (46)

This event includes the human domination and cruelty to the animal, and the reaction of the Buck to the stranger at the rail station. There is the reciprocity of the

conventionally attributed instincts. Human is normally, civilized, gentle and calm but he gets angry and irrational at the dog to the extent of beating Buck. It is reversion of the humanistic nature into the animalistic one. Similarly, Buck gets suspicious of the stranger when he takes the rope to fetch the dog. The dog reacts and shows his unwillingness by seeing the possible upcoming danger in his life. It echoes the similarity of the human-animal expectation, desires and preferences.

One of the anthropocentric logics to validate the human primacy is the reference to the sensory perception in hierarchical discourse. We take the presence of five sense organs in human as the special privilege endowed by the nature. That possession of the sense organs is supposed to be the source of knowledge according to the empiricist school of thought. Knowledge is the differential mark that makes human distinct. But this long existing notion of rationality and knowledge comes under eraser with the following context in *The Call of the Wild*: "The change in Buck happened quickly. His muscles became hard as iron. He did not feel ordinary pain. He could eat anything no matter how loathsome it appeared. His senses of sight and smell became keen. His hearing developed so that he could hear the faintest sound in his sleep and know if his life was risk"(29). Like the human beings' senses, Buck also has all sensory organs active which provide him the ability to cope with the situation.

The sense of touch is represented by the words 'hard as iron and pain' in the above descriptive piece about him. Similarly, the gustatory sense can be referred by the word 'eat' and the 'loathsome' that suggests bad or rotten taste. The adversity of the situation in the snow made his visionary, olfactory and auditory senses alert. Therefore, it is not only the human that is regulated by the senses but the functioning of those organs in the animals are equal vibrant. The idea of "genetic determinism" propounded by Gregor Mendel is not only applicable to the humans but the nonhuman

species also inherit the ancestral instinct in the dormant condition or in the explicit appearance in socialization process though it comes into effect as per the circumstances. According to Evelyn Keller, It involves the "passing of discrete unit of inheritance or genes from parents to offspring"(176). This theory of begetting the physical and psychological traits is seen in the case of the Buck in *The Call of the Wild*: "Buck's instincts, long dead, were awakened once again. The domesticated generations fell from him. It was easy for him to learn to fight with the quick wolf snap. His ancestors had fought this way and now it was time for him to do the same. These ways came back to him as if they had never been completely lost. They stirred the old life in him" (29). As Buck was bred from the Bernard and Scotch Shepherd entailing the dog and wolf features, we can see the domestic and wild instinct in him. It is the circumstances that lead him from the honest pet to the fierce wild animal. In the Klondike, he changes and adopts the sylvan identity that was in dormant stage when he was in the human society. This is an example of his similarity with the human in terms of the physical and psychological changes.

The exclusion or the utility-based inclusion of nonhuman animals in social work is seen in perspectives and practice of the animals mark meaning in the text as the animal has always played a role in the works of human society. In this regard, Ryan Quinn's argument is worth quoting: "Non human animals are central to social work as humans" (3). His contention is that in the social work and sociology, despite of the binary relations, animals have accompanied human beings: "Buck lived the life of noble beast and felt perhaps, too much pride in him. But he saved himself by not becoming a men pampered house dog. Hunting and outdoor life had kept him social...this was the way in which Buck lived in 1897, when the Klondike strike dragged men from all over the world into the frozen North"(8). The discovery of the

gold mine in the North was spread all over the world that attracted the traders. It brought rush in them and they needed strong dogs to sled into the snow and the dogs accompanied, assisted this human project until the last time. Except from the traditional social work of the dog i.e. giving security to the house, we can see hunting and outdoor travel with the owners is an extended social role of the dog in *The Call of the Wild*. But unfortunately, as the things stand at present in social work, other areas of social life and even in the *The Call of the Wild*, dogs are not seen as persons or as selves. Instead they are treated as a mean to human end.

The use of dogs as means to human end to improve the lives of human is not the final identity and purpose of dogs. Their behavioral adaptation according to the human expectation can equalize human and dog. They modify their behavior define the situation and select courses of action in society. But due to the preoccupied speciesist mentality, many sociologists remain unconvinced. In *The Call of the Wild*, the dogs provide connection, loyalty, reciprocity of purpose responsibility, comfort and relaxation to the masters. Risky and abusive behavior towards dog endangered all those who were together in Klondike gold rush. The masters are seen more abusive than loving and respecting to them.

Animal characters in *The Call of the Wild* undergo undignified captivity. From the biospherical egalitarian perspective, they are deprived of their dignified life. Dignity is not a status or quality that a being possesses, but it is rather a relational property, a way or being treated and perceived. The dogs are treated by their captors in ways that deny, disrespect or undermine their dignity. Lori Gruen argues: "We need to be attentive not only welfare but to the dignity of the captives, and this means ensuring them privacy"(50). Even if the dogs, as animals are unaware of direct

sufferings of dignity, they are denied of it. This denial of animal dignity by the humans appears in the form of oppression:

The six remaining dogs were skeletons like Buck. And like Buck, none had any strength or spark left. The pain of their beating was dull and distant. It was as if they were not even alive. They were simply bags of bones...the dogs dropped down in their harness like dead dogs. Only when the club fell upon them repeatedly, would they stagger to their feet and move forward. (70)

In above condition of the dogs, we see that they were badly and forcefully compelled to sled, beyond their energy. Dead like physical condition of them was the manifestation of their masters' denial of self-respect of the dogs. The masters did not have the sense of empathy to understand others' pain. As a result, the victim dogs could not receive any sympathy. Dignity and self-respect are to be felt in the natural relationship which cannot be seen in *The Call of the Wild*.

Domesticating animal, keeping the pets, confining humans or imprisoning wild animals in the zoo are various forms of captivity that are oriented to meet some purpose of human beings or an individual. They are guided by the politics of having entertainment, doing some works, eating meat or at least to establish and sustain superiority of a group or persons over others. In this regard of politics of captivity, Kelly Struthers and Chole Taylor argue that: "we ought to do away with this distinction as all captivity is a political exercise of power of our group over another, the most profound exercise of power being to determine the lives purposes of those held captive"(48). They do not see any differences between the various forms of captivity in essence. In the practice they many manifest in different mode like in the zoo, jail, tied with rope or alluring some animals with some food but the strategy of all captivities is to dominate and dictate them. For example, Buck and other dogs face

different ways of human manipulation from the beginning in *The Call of the Wild*. At Judge Miller's house, Buck was kept in comparatively liberal captivity in terms of physical comfort and self respect. But as he is kidnapped and sold by Manuel, he experiences different types of human control, which keeps on changing through the novel. Behind all, the politics of fulfilling human desires is common to them.

Human being is hostile to the nature and surrounding environment. They view it with consumerist eye. So, the presence of human in the nature or with the nonhuman company reminds of the inevitable disaster. In their radical voice, the scholars, Wachowski et.al. In *The Matrix* blame human to be the selfish exploiter:

It came to me when I tried to classify your species; I realized that you are not actually mammals. Every mammal on this planet instinctively develops a natural equilibrium with the surrounding environment but you humans do not. You move to an area and you multiply and multiply until every natural resource is consumed. The only way you can survive is to spread to another area. There is another organism on this planet that follows the same pattern.

Do you know what is it?-A virus. Human beings are diseases, a cancer of this planet. (193)

The denouncement of humanity as the disease for the planet reverses the historical biological superiority of human beings. Irresponsibility of human species to maintain natural balance, their intentional multiplication to finish the natural resources and migration to another untrodden place of the earth are virus tendencies. Criticizing human to the lower level than other mammals can be contextualized with *The Call of the Wild*:

When the people heard of the Klondike gold mines, they rushed there by exploiting the dogs mercilessly to collect gold: spring came once again and

with it, not the lost mine but a broad valley where god glimmered at the bottom of their washing pans. The rocks were full of gold! The men looked no farther and settled on the rich land. Each day they found thousands of dollars worth of gold...there was nothing for the dogs to do expect fetch the game that Thornton killed. (98)

To relate the idea from *The Matrix* with the text of anthropocentric business, the journey of Thornton, Francois and other gold collectors can be what he says "move to an area." His blame of disturbing the natural equilibrium may mean the extraction of the natural resources and weather adversity. The description of gold refers to the consumerist purpose of humans. Dogs' selfless job to satisfy the masters puts them in higher position. Lack of far-sightedness of human beings in the relationship with the other nonhuman species and nature is shadowed. It can be substantiated that men looked no farther and settled in the rich land. In this sense, the valorization of the rest of the mammals than human sound logical.

Human dominance and exploitation of the dog in Jack London's *The Call of the Wild* goes in the double standards of behavior. They are treated with the affection and cruelty. The seemingly affectionate behavior of the masters like Thornton is the hypocritical way of manipulation. After all, the underlying motive of that is to influence the dogs to complete their works. Affection is not the opposite of dominance; rather it is another form of human domination. Dominance may be affectionate with no hint of cruelty and exploitation that finally makes someone victim, as a cruel boy to animal pretends in the following poem by Spencer Keralis in "Feeling Animal: Pet-Making and Mastery in the Slave's Friend."

I will never hurt a little dog,
But stroke and pat his head,

I lie to see him wag his tail,
I like to see him fed.
Then I will never beat my dog,
Nor will I give him pain,
Poor fellow! I will give him food,
And he will love me again. (134)

The rhyme implies the profit-oriented affection of the boy literally but if we relate the context with his background, the sense of cruel dominance underlies the lines. The boy not only loves his dog but also may have beaten it. It sounds ironical from the last two lines that he has debased his pet. The only thing he seeks to do is that he wants to have control over it without recourse to the direct violence.

This type of gentle cruelty or human hypocrisy can be traced out in the novel. Buck and other dogs are merely like the 'freed slaves.' As the freed ones cannot be slaves and vice-versa, the buck and all other dogs are victimized by the dualistic human behaviors in the novel. For example, Thornton was a type of permanent torturer of Buck as he was the owner but he got angry and kicked Hal who whipped Buck upon his failure to pull the sled. Despite being the first person to buy Buck for the same purpose, Thornton shows his artificial soft corner to the dog: "Buck had failed. This alone was enough to drive Hal into rage. He put down his whip and picked up his club and pounded the club into Buck. John Thornton rose and knocked Hal to the ground. Finally, he choked out. If you strike that dog again, I will kill you. Buck away, I said I would kill you and I meant it. Leave the dog alone"(73-74). Here is the duality of human attitude to the animal. It is self evident that it was Thornton who had bought and brought Buck to the North in Klondike for using him as the reliable sled-dog. Therefore, there is no place of reason that he was sympathetic to the

dog on the way. Buck gets harshly beaten and compelled to perform the difficult jobs by the Thornton himself. But in the above episode, his seemingly sympathetic action to protect Buck from Hal is guided with the motive of further exploitation. His patronizing manner suggests hidden cruelty.

The representation of the suffering of dogs in the company is not objective in *The Call of the Wild*. The authorial subjectivity is dominant like other works of writings. The trial and tribulation in their journey from College Park to the North Klondike, interracial and intra-racial conflicts; and hardships of the dogs have not grasped the gravity from the animal standpoint. David Perkin and Elizabeth Croll note: "Despite the fact that many novels of the part, as well as memoirs and travel books include travel by horse-drawn coach, they "almost never" mention the heroes' sufferings, which remain invisible to most passengers, or perhaps the novelist considered them irrelevant to the theme of the novel (105). Perkin and Croll's idea to bring the animal issue into primacy denotes equal space for the animals in the text. Since the writers are already preoccupied with the speciesist mentality, their unconscious gets expressed in the anthropocentric mode which causes poetic injustice in the text. The inclination of writer and critic makes great difference in position and place of the animal characters in a literary text. Jack London also cannot escape this problem in *The Call of the Wild*. The biased subjectivity in the projection of the Buck, the hero and other dogs in the novel can best be critiqued with reference to the graphic portrayal of them.

There are eleven pictures of Buck and his companions in the novel which are all projected in an inferior, submissive and helpless outlook. Despite of the tale of dogs' adventures and their competitive agency, Buck and his fellow-dogs have appeared secondary in those pictures. Therefore, the writer's initial intention, as

suggested by the title' to present Buck as a hero is deferred unconsciously. For example, the lying picture of Buck in chapter two reminds of his helplessness and seeking mercy of the owner. His lying posture like unconscious in front of his master, Thornton's masterly position in the excusing and patronizing pose with Buck proves the anthropocentric view of the writer. Buck's virility and genetic features of offensiveness has been disfigured into the obedient, innocent and dumb creature in chapter three. Similarly, In chapter eight, the contrast between the majestically magnified pose of Thornton with the log; and weak, fragile, and grounded position of the dogs supports the logic of Parkin that the portrayal, whether in graphic or verbal form of animal is always biased to them. To sum up the logic, the circumstantial reality of the animals has largely been ignored so that the perceived pathos of their condition could be used to illustrate the mental and moral state of human beings. The moral reality of the dog's suffering is overridden in the writer's interest of creating an aesthetic effect.

Dogs are not biased with the humans. They are like human beings, endowed with love and hatred. They show both instincts depending on the situation. On the other side, the behaving patterns of human to the animals are always exclusive. They rarely include good behavior and friendly mentality towards the animals. But the dog's behaviors are inclusive to show the love and offence. In the similar vein, Haraway's terms are relevant: "dogs bring together human and nonhuman, organic and technological, state and subject, nature and culture"(152). By speaking in favor of the dogs, she does not deny the human uniqueness. She clearly envisions the connection of nature and culture or the human and animals.

We can align with Haraway's inclusive idea about the dogs and other animal traits by exemplifying from *The Call of the Wild*. Buck and other dogs are more gentle

and reconciliatory with the enemies and adversities. They do not rear revenge against their masters despite of their maltreatment. Buck could take revenge with his master Thornton at the end of the novel. He at least could repay him by not protecting from attacks of the Indian tribes but as he had human and nonhuman or the natural and cultural learning, he performs duty honestly until the last: "Thornton was thrown into the water and headed downstream to the worst part of the rapids. It was in the stretch of rapids that no man could survive...Buck sprung into action. He jumped into the water and managed to catch up with Thornton some 300 yards away"(86). Buck's honesty, selfless nature and devotion to his master in hardships outweighed his earlier cruelties to Buck. He dives into the water to rescue his master.

Had it happened with Buck, Thornton would not have rescued like that. Therefore, dogs are far better empathetic and sympathetic to their fellow-creature, as says a critic Saunders in *Boy, the Wandering Dog*: "We dogs are better friends than men are to themselves"(359). A boy character in the novel makes this speech which Saunders means to pinpoint the need for the continued development of ethical thought about and ethical treatment of nonhuman animals.

The Call of the Wild brings nature and culture, in broader sense, into contest. At present, the struggle of human beings is marked by the desire to dominate and exploit the nature. In the novel, Judge Miller, Thornton and all campaigners of Klondike gold rush are the representative characters of culture or what humans call as the civilization. On the other, Buck, Spitz and other dogs including the natural resources, environment stand for the entire nature. The journey they make and the relation, behavior of human characters have allegorical significance of nature-culture contest. Nature consists of biotic and abiotic organs that forms organic whole of the earth. For the holistic performance and meaning of nature, conciliatory relation

between those earth communities is needed. But the tragedy is that anthropocentric thought of human civilization has put them into conflicting position. Focusing on the necessity of their connectivity, Jhon Hochman writes:

Nature and culture cannot be willed together by glibly naturalizing culture, by culture simplistically proclaiming itself part of nature, or by stupidly world nature into an appendage of culture, world nature into a culturally constructed product. Any substantial merging of nature and culture will take generation of internal cultural struggle. (192)

In this corpus, Hochman emphasizes the culture to be the part of nature. Nature and culture are in internal or dormant struggle for existence and identity which invites disaster for the both. If they go forth separately, the ecology cannot sustain in worldwide relations.

On the issue of nature and culture relationships in *The Call of the Wild*, it can be argued that the text is the depiction of contradiction initiated due to human behavior to the animal and nature. The narrative takes its origin from the exploitative motive of humans to enslave the dogs indoors and outdoors. When Manuel, the gardener, on Miller's estate, leads Buck to the station by kidnapping, the action of Manuel and stranger on Buck and his reaction to them support the idea of dichotomous relation in the text:

But when the ends of the rope were placed in the stranger's hand, he growled menacingly. He had merely intimidated his displeasure, in his pride believing that to intimate was to command. But to his surprise, the rope tightened around his neck, shutting off his breath. In quick range he sprang at the man who met him half way, grappled him close by the throat, and with a deaf twist threw him over on back. (46)

This episode carries the theme of contest between Buck and the dealers. The conflict for supremacy is explicitly shown by the dictions like "rope in the stranger's hand," "growled menacingly," "shuttering of his breath," "sprang at the man," and "grappled at the throat." The above discourse consists of the stranger's controlling mentality and Buck's struggle for individual freedom that continues throughout the narrative. This struggle between Buck and stranger either for survival or for mastery, suggests nature-culture confrontation brought about by the human desire and deeds. To quote Rueckert's statement: "Human beings are the sign of environmental threat as a result of their dominance over the earth, their anthropocentric vision, their desire to conquer, humanize, domesticate, violate and exploit every natural things"(113). Since all humans and nonhumans are the constituents of the earth, they should be preserved and respected. Top violate a single entity of the whole is to ultimately threaten the earth. Therefore, the animals from the micro to macro organism should be behaved with the equal consideration to their interests.

The Call of the Wild (1903) is considered London's greatest literary achievement and classic prototype of American literature. Its landmark thematic feature is to expose the Rueckert's idea of violation and exploitation of the natural things existing in the environmental, biological or physical forms. In the narrative *The Call of the Wild*, human actions and desires are consequential to destroy the nature culture harmony: "Buck's first day in the North was like a nightmare. Every second was filled with shock and surprise. He had been jerked from civilization and thrust into the wild, the dense forest, Klondike attraction of gold, the habitat of the ancestors. He needed to be alert at all times to savagery"(21). With the presence of humans, Klondike, earlier virgin piece of nature, got crushed. It was an amazing beautiful place for Buck full of the wilderness, the newly discovered gold mines and

the living place of the wild animals. Soon, the beautiful harmony of the place was violated. Along with the exploitation of the dog, the gold collectors' actions resulted in conquering the whole natural existence of the things. They also hunted the wild animals and destroyed their deep and dark habitats. So, the mission of human civilization to get victory over dogs, wilderness and natural resources finally have disharmonizing effect in the organic nature.

In terms of his struggle, Buck can be called a Darwinian hero. He meets all the ideas of "survival of the fittest." Buck both physically and mentally adjusts to the change which makes him survive in adversities. Jean Gyan posits: "In the natural order of the things, it is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent that survives but it is the ones which are most responsive to change"(103). Aligning with this idea of Darwin, buck has to fight and face to become a super dog. He has to survive famine, fight from other animals and abuse from humans. He follows natural selection by embodying the ability to adapt the change:

A chill wind was blowing that nipped him sharply and bit with special venom into his wounded shoulder. He lay down on the snow and attempt to sleep but the frost drove him shivering to his feet. Miserable and disconsolate, he wandered about among the many tents only to find that one place as cold as another. Here and there savage dogs rushed upon him, but he bristled his neck-hair and snarled (for he was learning fast) and they let him go his way on unmolested. (58)

This example of hardships of Buck during his journey and stay in Klondike makes him an epitome of struggle of animal to cope with the adversities. Despite of the physical pain caused by hard wind in snow covered land and danger from the savage

dogs; he could assimilate to the environment. Along with the physical adjustment he also was prepared psychologically that made him survive and sustain life.

To sum up, the dichotomy between human and nonhuman is cultural construction rather than natural. The culture of human civilization has been playing in the society since time immemorial, which has created a discourse that human being, is the distinct of all other creatures of the world. The other animals and natural resources exist for satisfying the human physical desires, which is the speciesist discourse. In the earth, the existing biotic and abiotic entities have equal role to run the life cycle of all. No entities can exist absolutely by divorcing or ignoring others. The chain of being should be looked from the biospherical egalitarian perspectives. Since human beings are guided by the self-centered mentality, their all practical life and behaviors towards the fellow beings are oriented to cost-benefit. This trend of gaining physical prosperity is questionable.

The tenets of ecocriticism to maintain the overall balance between/among the earth communities are considerable in questioning the human superiority. The domination of humans over animal in the name of farming, pet keeping or domesticating is mere euphemistic way of exploitation. Lack of equal consideration to the nonhumans leads human species to the apocalyptic disaster ultimately. The tragic course of humanity is that it is filled with hubris that has made them narcissistic. The ability to feel pleasure and avoid pain is common to all living creatures who share this earth. Due to the ignorance of sustainable relation and myopic vision, human being is proceeding headlong by creating the artificial binaries between and among the animal species.

The belief in binaries about human and animal is human is the artificial discourse. Relative existence of human and animal deconstructs the anthropocentric

discourse of single existence. The ontology of being is not separate or independent according to him. He relates the meaning of human 'I' with the existence of the animal. Likewise, Darwin's idea of evolutionary process is inclusive to blur the human-made boundary against the nonhumans. The ethical logic of Peter Singer to maintain equality between human and animal is relevant to trace out the center margin relation of human and nonhuman in the literary creation like in *The Call of the Wild*.

Primacy of human beings to fulfill their economic motives prevails in *The Call of the Wild*. The sense of superiority and exploitative intention of Thornton, Charles, Hal and other human characters gets exposed by their inhuman behavior towards Buck, Spitz, Curly and other dogs. During their journey from the College Park to Klondike, the dogs had to live on hardship and tortures from their masters. Out of the fourteen dogs, there remained only six alive due to the inconsiderate behaviors of their masters. The final episode of *The Call of the Wild* shows departure of Buck to the wilderness with the wolves. It marks the result of human cruelty. Because, initial civilized or socialized life of Buck is transformed into beastlike ferocity as he is fed up with the selfish and callous human company. Despite quitting them, the periodical visit of Buck to Thornton raises a question to the anthropocentric trend of the humans in common and justifies innocent fellow-feeling in the animals.

Int(er)ra Species Bonding in EB White's *Charlotte's Web*

Except the human-centered culture, the nature in its organic form shows symbiotic relations between and among the species. The nature endows similar attributes to the human and animals. It suggests that a human turns hostile to the animals only after socialization. A child in the early phase is the epitome of innocence and love to all. It is the human civilization that corrupts gradually by turning into selfish and by teaching sense of exploitation of nonhumans. It draws the demarcations

of exclusion. In this connection, Glen Love writes in *Practical Criticism*: "Human behavior is not an empty vessel whose only input will be that provided by nature, but it is strongly influenced by genetic orientation that underlies or modifies or are modified by cultural influences"(6). It echoes the sense that culture makes human gradual enemy of the nature. One is guided by the previous generations' attitude to the fellow creatures.

In *Charlotte's Web*, Fern's bonding with Wilbur (pig) and Arvy's love for the frog show that human and the animals are originally in symbiotic relations. The dominating trends in human develop along with the utilitarian ideas. Ferns, an innocent human loves, cares and rears the runt pig without any selfishness whereas her father, Arable and mother Arable have planned to kill it only for not meeting their expectations. Fern's mother says: "One of the pigs is a runt. It is very small and weak, and it will never amount to anything. So your father has decided to do away with it...Do not yell Fern! Your father is right. The pig would die anyway" (1). This quote of Mrs. Arable aligns with the profit motive of Arable. They represent the material culture that counts everything in amount and personal benefit. Arable's idea to kill the runt pig is influenced by the anthropocentric culture he has been socialized with. He must have been an innocent and reconciliatory to the animals in the age of Fern now.

On the other hand, the children, Fern and Arvy represent the nature as they are innocent to behave with the animals. Fern's refutation of her father's decision to kill the pig paves reconciliatory way in the novel: "But it is unfair, the pig could not help being born small, could it? If I had been very small at birth, would you have killed me...I see no difference. This is the most terrible case of injustice I ever heard of" (1). This contrasting idea of Fern to her father is the contrast of attitudes to the animals. Her attitude to the pig is integrated. She takes it as the family member and convinces

him not to execute. This textual evidence support the claim that a human is born with the symbiotic understanding but it is lost due to the social, cultural or economic consciousness.

When Fern gets pig from her father, she gives it a name as 'Wilber'. Naming to someone means to use language. The use of language gives existence to someone or something. She, like humans, equalizes the pig with the name. It means that the recognition of the pig with the name reminds of the co-existence of human and animals. To use Martin Heidegger's idea, the 'being' of the pig is counted in the language. He says "Language is the house of being which means all exist in language or language makes everything to come into existence. He says in "Letter on Humanism": "Language is the house of being. In its home, human beings dwell. Those who think and those who create with words are the guardians of this home. Their guardianship accomplishes the manifestation of being insofar as they bring this manifestation to language and preserve it in language through their saying"(217). Heidegger means that language is more than a tool. We live in our language, the lives are determined by it and we think insofar as we bring 'Being' to language.

In *Charlotte's Web*, the existence of pig and spider are brought to language with the names Wilbur and Charlotte. Before they are named, their existence was not counted by the human beings. The use of language by the goose, gander, rat, pig, Charlotte, etc. in the novel also validates their equal existence to humans. But it is the human thought that animals do not have their existence/identity as they lack the language. In *Charlotte's Web*, Fern brings pig into 'Being' through language: "Fern named her pet, selecting the most beautiful name she could think of. Its name is Wilbur (3)." "She was so grossed in Wilbur that she unconsciously happens to reply her teacher in the class. "Fern, what is the capital of Pennsylvania?" "Wilbur" replied,

Fern (3)". This error proves Fern's engagement with the pig with no sense of othering the animal. The above quote justifies the human reconciliatory attitude in its original or innocent stage.

The conversing qualities of the gander and goose, rat and pig, Charlotte and Wilbur further support the identity or the place of nonhumans in human society through language. In his article, "Reading Children and Animal-Human Relations in *Charlotte's Web*..." Chen-Wei Yu comments: "The animal characters in the novel speak as fluently to one another as do the humans among themselves" (133). Chen finds no demarcation between the two species in sharing the idea and communicating. This linguistic feature omits the boundary to superiorize humans. The following episode of dialogue between Wilbur and goose brings the issue into light:

Goose: You do not have to stay in that dirty-little dirty yard.

Wilbur: What?

Goose: I suggest you come on out. It is wonderful out here.

Wilbur: I like it. That is, I guess like it. Where do you think I'd better go?

Goose: Anywhere you like. Go down through the orchard, root up the sod.

This piece of conversation to express their feelings and ideas carries two logics together. First, it marks the role of language to equalize with the humans. Second, the animals also have plans, likes, dislikes, desires of freedom and cooperative feelings to share which gives them agency.

One of the landmarks of symbiotic bondage is the presence of cooperation and coexistence, which is primarily limited to the human world only. Humans do not consider the sense or sharing and caring in the animals. But the animals possess it to the equal extent. In this regard, Nathan Lents says:

For social species, cooperation is essential to living together peacefully. The community cannot thrive if individual members try to sneak more than their fair share or get away with not pulling their weight in the herd or pack...Natural selection would thus select against the selfish through their banishment, pro social behaviors, come with no direct benefit to the individual, only to others or to the group.(55)

Nathan highlights community feelings and mutual help in the animals living in the society. More than the personal benefit, they require promoting and praising social/communal living. These kinds of behaviors were once thought to be found only in humans. For the common welfare, the social animals may exclude their selfish and uncooperative members. In an episode of *Charlotte's Web*, this principle can be evident when Wilbur is offered help by other animals to escape from the barn:

"Run toward me!" yelled the gander.

"Run uphill!" cried the sheep.

"Turn and twist!" honked the goose.

"Jump and dance!" said the rooster.

"Look out for Lurvy!" called the cows.

"Look out for Zuckerman!" yelled the gander. (11)

To save Wilbur from getting grabbed by Lurvy and Zuckerman, his fellow animals try their level best. They all encourage and inspire Wilbur to continue efforts for liberation. They do not turn selfish and sadist by looking into his pain. They have the sense of sympathy and empathy towards the pig. It tells that the animals are also social being in term of cooperative feelings. On the other hand, the rat with selfish nature is excluded from the company. The rat is not entertained in their group for its uncooperative and asocial behavior: "Talking to Templeton, the rat, was not the most

interesting occupation in the world but it was better than nothing" (13). Because of his crafty selfish behavior, Templeton is always sided away in normal times except in some lonely situations. Similarly, the uncooperative behavior of the lamb is against the majority of other pets. To avoid the monotony of loneliness, Wilbur proposes the lamb to play with but gets the reply: "oh, be quiet! Go play by yourself! I do not play with pigs"(15). Lamb's alienated nature and unwillingness to accompany Wilbur pushes him away from the community of other pets. It is an example of the prosocial instinct in the domesticated pets.

Out of the multiple humanistic features, time consciousness and time keeping is supposed to be a typical human quality as claimed by the anthropocentrism. But the animals are equally aware of the morning, day, night and other temporal phenomena. The return of the cattle from the jungle at sun setting, crowing of the cock in the morning, signifies the animal's response to the pace of time. They are quite vigilant of time as Blanchard Pierric and Fritz Herve opine: "Vigilant they are in time consuming, since time is usually a limited resource for free-ranging animals, it may conflict with other activities such as feeding. They have routine vigilance when the animal is simply monitoring its surroundings during spare time"(54). For the nonhuman animals, the importance and relation of time to their daily activities is worthy to mention. So, in utilizing time, they are well-routined and conscious even of the leisure time. They think for their future at present. They come up with their routine plan like human. The pig, Wilbur in *Charlotte's Web* meets the logic of time vigilance:

He had other plans too. His plans for the day went something like this:

Breakfast would be finished at seven. From seven to eight, Wilbur planned to have a take with Templeton. From eight to nine, Wilbur planned to take a nap

outdoors in the sun. From nine to eleven, he planned to dig a hole...From eleven to twelve, he planned to stand still and watch flies on the board. (278)

Wilbur has a compact schedule of a day just like the busy human beings in their daily pursuits. He could have lived idly had he not been aware of the flow of time. The above schedule or an animal proves that they are preoccupied with the sense of time. Wilbur must have been familiar with the continuity of time.

Conventionally accepted as the typical human trends of intolerance, sadness, even disliking foods in mental and physical discomforts are carried by the nonhumans, too. They give up their foods and rests in the emotional breakdown. They display various similarities in the loss or grief. Along with the physical expression, responses and action in such situation, their psychological or inner responses mark much. To support this idea of inner responsiveness, Nathan Lents deserves quoting in the following lines: "I think it is safe to say that animals display many of the same symptoms of grief that humans do. They withdraw socially, eat less and play less. It even appears as if some animal experience a bit of denial. Denial is often the first stage of grief in humans" (94). Nathan posits that upon the rejection or dejection, it is not only the humans to demonstrate abnormal psychic behavior but the animals also go to the extent of self denial or negation. This idea of self-denial and unhappiness of animals can be substantiated by the following textual evidence in the chapter four of *Charlotte's Web*:

This was almost more than Wilbur could stand; on the dreary, rainy day to see his breakfast eaten by somebody else...friendless, dejected and hungry, he threw himself down in the manure and sobbed ... "I think there is something wrong with that pig of yours. He has not touched his food..." said Zuckerman. (16)

It can be confirmed from the above that the internal desires to eat, play and be happy have some cause- effect relation in the animals like human traits. The social surrounding brings difference in the psychological state and then in the behaviors. The two major external causes of losing food and being neglected from the fellows result in Wilbur's emotional breakdown. He cries, gives up his meal and falls sick. At the loss of the things and failure in achieving the desired goal, human shows the similar symptoms of Wilbur.

Charlotte, in the narrative, is very skilful for making herself fit into the situations. Her existence and tactics to live in the company of other animals match with the Darwinian idea of survival of the fittest and adaptability. Her understanding towards the survival reminds of the fact that all organisms have evolved through an adaptive process of natural selection and complex functional structure. Joseph Carroll writes in his book *Literary Darwinism*:

All organisms have universal, species typical array of behavioral and cognitive characteristics. They presuppose that all such characteristics are genetically constrained and that these constraints are mediated through anatomical features and psychological process, including the neurological and hormonal systems that directly regulate perception, thoughts and feeling. (vi)

This idea of Carroll assumes the behavior and psychology of the species have to do with the inheritance and modification. They have to primarily depend on the original features or physical, mental and functional activities of their predecessors but at the same time their existence is conditioned by the social environment. They have to abide by their racial system of collecting and eating food, fulfilling their desire in their own creativity and efforts.

E.B. White depicts the aforementioned Darwinian philosophy in the *Charlotte's Web* through the speech of the Charlotte in terms of receiving and eating food for the survival:

Nobody feeds me. I have to get my own living. I live by my own wits. I have to be sharp and clever, lest I go hungry. I have to think things out, catch what you can, take what comes and it just so happens my friend that what comes is flies and insects and bugs and furthermore, do you realize that if I did not catch bugs and eat them, bugs would increase and multiply and get so numerous that they would destroy the earth, wipe out everything. (21)

Charlotte's confirmation about the way of his survival in the above statement confirms Carroll's assumption. As the spider, Charlotte has to seek for her feedings in her own. The nature has endowed certain tricks to catch the insects and flies to her race, which she inherited from her begetters. To meet the requirements or conditions of the environment, the spider has got the mental sharpness and similar physical features. Moreover, the Charlotte seems aware of the food chain and ecological balance. Because of the inseparable relation in the food system, Charlotte's eating insects and bugs contribute to the lives of other human and nonhuman in the earth community. The human animal identification and subjectivity formation proceeds as the plot advances. Fern and Wilbur stand into same platform in forming their identity. Wilbur encourages Fern to identify herself with the pig. It develops their subjectivity, Karen Coats' ideas in this connection in *Looking Glasses and Neverland: Lacan, Desire and Subjectivity in Children's Literature* matter: "*Charlotte's Web* as a Lacanian Poetics...in its allegorical representation of the development of subjectivity. Both the girl and the pig Wilbur become subjects through social interactions" (32). Coats means to theorize the case of Fern and Wilbur friendship in an identificatory mode. To put it

another way, human's (Fern) identification with the animal (pig) has been possible by the characterization of them as very small and weak. As the children, they both undergo the socialization and maturation with the advancement of the plot. Not only Fern but Charlotte proves to be equal by making a tricky plan to protect Wilbur from being killed.

The Charlotte shows visionary or cautionary ability about the potential killing of Wilbur: "There are a lot of things Wilbur does not know about life. He is really very innocent little pig. He does not even know what is going to happen to him around Christmas time. He has no idea that Mr. Zuckerman and Lurvy are plotting to kill him" (21). This foreseeing ability of Charlotte to predict Wilbur's future co-relates with Coats' logic of establishing agency of the animal (Charlotte). It confirms that a spider can read the future that justifies her ability to act. Later, with this ability, Charlotte even enables Wilbur to gain his identity among the human characters Fern, Zuckerman, Lurvy and others.

It is the Charlotte who makes Wilbur live with and struggle against the human characters. The Charlotte, as an insect turns out to be out smarter than the human. So, the human ingenuity can be traced in the animals. In some cases, they can become clever and smarter than the superior human mind. The proximity in the mental smartness enables them to live with human in both competitive and co-coordinating relations. In this eyes of the critic Amy Ratelle in the article "Ethics and Edibility in *Charlotte's Web*": "E.B. White grants Wilbur a unique animal subjectivity through Charlotte's ingenious plan aiming to make the human community complicit in recognition of Wilbur as an individual "(334). She asserts that it is the witty Charlotte that gives idea to bring Wilbur into recognition among the people at home and then in the fair. Had there not been Charlotte, the pig (Wilbur) would have been killed by

Zuckerman at Christmas. Ratelle's claim about the contribution and mental equality of the spider to outsmart Zuckerman's plan of killing Wilbur can be supported through the following narrative in the text:

If she says they plan to kill you, I am sure it is true. It is also the direst trick I ever heard of. What people do not think of...But I am going to save you and I want you to be quiet down immediately. You are crying on in a childish way...The way to save Wilbur's life is to play trick on Zuckerman. I can surely fool a man. People are not as smart as the bugs...that people are very gullible. (27-32)

In this speech of Charlotte, the sense of confidence and assurance to Wilbur can be seen. When Wilbur comes to know about the reason of fattening him, he is worried of inevitable death at the hand of his owner. The bad news puts Wilbur into the death vision. He starts crying to face it. But, Charlotte in the meeting of the goose, gander, ship, rat and Wilbur discloses her perception towards the human. She assures all that humans are not as cleverer as they claim. Her claim about Zuckerman's to be gullible justifies the biotic similarity in the species.

For long past, the human traditions have made the nonhuman animals as the goods for consumption. To eat the meat, humans rear the animals by rendering them almost invisible and unworthy of serious attentions, which is against the ethics and justice to them. Though Slaughter of domesticated animal might not take place everyday among the peasants, it occurs commonly throughout the year. Heide Estes calls animals as humans and the enemy of another human (animals) in *Anglo-Saxon Literary Landscapes*:

Moreover, the animals refers to the human who kills it as 'enemy' and uses the terms 'besnybede' and 'binom' both words capable of referring to robbery,

an act of human being against another human (or human institution): It is unusual outside of deep ecological context to think of it as possible to steal from nature. (126)

For Heide, rearing animals with consumerist purpose and killing them is similar to committing robbery. It can act of disturbing and destroying the part of deep ecological existence of the beings. She puts both human and the animals in the same category to infer the symbiotic relations and opposing animal killing. Her logic can be helpful to address the following plan of Zuckerman's in the *Charlotte's Web*: "Almost all young pigs get murdered by the farmers as soon as the real cold weather sets in. There is regular conspiracy around here to kill at Christmas... When a pig is to be butchered, everybody helps...same thing, same business year after years" (27). The trend of humans to keep for killing is highlighted in the statement above. For feeding in the winter season and keeping them warm, the farmers eagerly domesticate pigs, ducks, geese and lambs as in the text. This type of cultural normalization of slaughter is an anti-humanistic as the animals mean human for Heide Estes.

The presence of mind in the animals like in the human beings may exist in different form and conditions. Accordingly, it functions with its own functioning mechanism. The cognitive power and sensory drives may work in typical way. But it does not mean that animals do not have the sensory perceptions to form knowledge and to play the mind, though human distinctness is defined with this logic, too. Peter Carruthers, in *American Philosophical Quarterly* opines:

It is impossible to teach a rat to respond to visual or auditory cues when searching for food, while it is easy to teach a rat to respond an olfactory cue. Pigeons, in contrast, can swiftly learn to utilize visual cues such as color when foraging, but cannot be taught to respond to odors or sounds. When a pigeon's

goal is to avoid a shock, in contrast, it can easily learn to respond to auditory cues as can rat in the same circumstances. (236)

The variances in internalizing, judging and acting methods of animal species does not bring difference in their goals. The common goal of searching for food can be met by smelling, seeing, touching, or tasting by the humans and animals. Therefore, Peter's example suggests commonality in uniqueness. This can further be exemplified with the textural narrative as follow:

A rat is rat, but my friends, if that ancient egg ever breaks, this barn will be untenable. "What does that mean" asked Wilbur. "It means nobody will be able to live here on account of the smell. A rotten egg is regular stink bomb" said Charlotte. "Let's see... one, two, three, and four...seven baby geese. Now, is not that lovely?" said Zuckerman. (25)

In the utterances above the conversation goes on about perceiving smell, seeing differently by them. According to Charlotte, rat is with sharp sense of smell to know the things. So, it is unique in the olfactory sense though it cannot touch or see the things first. Similarly, Wilbur's question, "What's that mean" refers to lack of the olfactory sense in gaining knowledge. So, he asks about it to Charlotte that what that means. Like the animals, Zuckerman counts eggs in number by seeing them first. His sense of sight, to form an idea, plays while he counts. He does not have to touch or smell them for the purpose.

The human drawn dichotomy with the animals is discriminatory. The animals are treated on the unequal base by the humans. Despite of meeting basic criterion of serving and feeding to the humans, they have to meet other standards of the human world. A goat and the pig may occupy same value in feeding meat but the pig is degraded on the aesthetic base of humans. In "Learning from Animals: Natural

History for Children” Harriet Ritvo writes: “. . . The pig for example, despite its incontestable value as food animal-ample recompense . . . For care and expenses bestowed on him-was routinely castigated as stupid, filthy as sordid seeming to delight in what is most offensive to other animals “(4). Ritivo underlines the devalued status of the pig among the domestic animals. Except supplying meat, it is expected to be beautiful to supply the sense beauty to the humans. Since it cannot meet that standard, the pig is kept in the dirty barns. The supportive evidence for this human attitude and behavior can be supplied through the following case with Wilbur in *Charlotte's Web*: “He is filthy behind the ears. Every time Lurvy slops him, the food runs down around the ears. Then it dries and forms a crust. He has also a smudge on one side, where he lays the manure” (47). Zuckerman's judgment of Wilbur (pig) pins down that the pig is by nature and filthy creature. But he does not realize it the cause of their filthy fooding and unclean lodging. Lurvy provides him leftover food; scraps and domestic liquid that makes the pig look dirty and rough in appearance.

One of the landmarks of children literature is he uses of animal characters as in *Charlotte's Web*. The domestic animals and their roles in the children's fiction cross the boundaries between man and beast in the way it began to be used just as an adjective to refer to the human actions or functions in the animalistic fashion. The early desire and features of humans in the child phase want to hypothesize a bond between child and animals. This desire for bond can be explored even in *Charlotte's Web* in the words of Cora Jeger:

E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* (1952) struggles to view the farm animals simply as animals. Instead, most analyses of the text retain the practice of seeing the animal body as stand in for human values, emotions and experiences. Animals in children's literature offer the experience to wander

back into the uncannily familiar bond we have with nature, whether it be through depiction of animal experiences or animal symbolism. (17)

She explores that the children's sentiments and experiences align with the nature of the domestic animals. Their likings towards each other merge into symbiosis. The symbiotic feelings in the children give birth to similar attitude in the animals towards them. The lively role played by the pig (Wilbur) is noteworthy to exemplify the opinion of Cora Juger through the textural narrative:

Every morning after breakfast, Wilbur walked out to the road with Fern and waited with her till the bus came. She would wave good bye to him, and he would stand and watch until it vanished around a turn...she would take him out and he would follow her around the place . . . Wilbur would get tired and Fern would pick him up. (5)

The physical closeness between Wilbur and Fern is based on their emotional bondage and experiences. The company of Fern with the pig has grown such a lively that it becomes a part of her daily routine. She feels better to be around with Wilbur than her own brother Arvy. It depicts that child character may be close to act with animal or desire to be one. This type of consideration in children's literature hints child-animal negotiation in forming and maintaining their identities. The merging or the cross-border lines represent symbiotic relations between them.

Despite of disapproval of inter species intimacy by the anthropocentric discourses, the post-humanist currents in the relation are including the animals in friendship. It has led to the emergence of hybrid families by mixing up the distant species and decentering the primacy of humans. In "The Animal Challenge to Sociology," critics, Nickie Charles and Bob Carter put forward their views: "We are witnessing the emergence of hybrid families or post-humanist households where

humans are de-centered and the species barrier has no meaning” (93). Their deconstructive idea about human-animal relation as superior inferior resounds in above statement. It carries an egalitarian outlook. She means to say that the conventional relationship of self (human) and other (animal) should be erased. It should be replaced with the interchangeable roles and positions of both of the species. It can further be strengthened with the human-animal relations and behaviors in the textual evidences below:

Then she lid again, lifted the pig out, and held it against her cheek. Look at my frog . . . The frog jumped and landed in Zuckerman's dishpan full of soapy water . . . And then Lurvy took another look and he saw something that made him set his pail down. There is the centre of Web neatly woven in block letters, was a message. It said: SOME PIG! (35)

These three events of the text are connotative of decentering of humans. The first event shows Fern's equal intimacy to the pig. She forgets her central position while picks up the pig and presses against her cheek with the sense of love. The second proves human-animal equality in Arvy's behavior to the frog. He brings it to kitchen table as if akin. In the third quote, the centre of human superiority is subverted by the spider's knitting web. It draws the all with knitted phrase "SOME PIG" which may mean that some pigs are more or equally talented than humans. Lurvy's business with the pail is diverted to this miraculous deed of the Charlotte. Therefore, it can be claimed that animals deserve the decentering ability whether in physical sense or in terms of thematic equality.

Pets provide humans more stability and sense of close relation than the human themselves. In some cases, a human may find peace and comfort from the animals especially from the domestic animals and pets. They are experienced as a source of

emotional support and comfort. The recognition of the affectionate relation between human animals can have some therapeutic value. About the affective relationship a critic Walsh F. in *Family Process* says: "The affective relationship between human and animals neither exist in isolation from other forms of animal human relations nor are they new phenomenon . . . and the positive impact of close emotional bonds between people and their pet has been recognized"(481-99). Walsh tries to relate the human-animal relation with the convention. Except the utilitarian or consumerist purpose, animals are kept for some mental recreation and providing mental peace. This trend of animal keeping has also been recognized gradually. Its therapeutic importance to sooth human mind, to provide inner calm by developing emotional linkage can be taken into consideration while the Dr. Dorian in the text says: "Well, I do not think you have anything to worry about. Let Fern associate with her friends in the barn if she wants to. I would say, off hand, that spider and pigs were fully as interesting as Henry Fussy" (111). Dr. Dorian's suggestion, upon Arable's visit, about Fern's abnormal intimacy with the pig, means that she has not any psychological problem. Rather the obsession of her with Wilbur may be healing her as she finds the animal company more interesting than the friendship with the boy Henry. The doctor's advice reconfirms healing ability of animals.

The shared feelings of security and insecurity, death and harm among the human and animals also put them into the single ground. Like human beings, the nonhuman species envision dark and bright future. They also can think about death, they are also afraid of losing their lives and missing their parents or children. J.M. Coetzee theorizes the idea in *The Lives of Animals*: "You say that death does not matter to animal because the animal does not understand death...can we say that the veal calf misses its mother? Does the veal calf enough of a grasp of the significance of

mother relation? Does the veal calf have the meaning of maternal absence?" (65-66). Coetzee's metaphorical questions address the issue that like the humans all the domestic and wild animals have fear of losing their kiths and kin. They rear the concern on the separation from them. Like the calf, a four footed domesticate animal, every insect gets touched by such cases which can be proved with Charlotte's postpartum condition below: "I just do not have much pep anymore. I guess I feel sad because I would not ever see my children . . . I have a feeling I am not going to see the results of last night's efforts. I do not feel good at all. I think I am languishing . . . it means I am slowing u p, feeling my age. I am not young any more"(54). Charlotte's laying eggs results into her sickness which puts her near to death. In such a situation, she is overwhelmed by the possible loss and separation with offspring yet to be hatched. She feels insecure of her own death and the death of the children. As a mother, she is overpowered by motherly attachment to the eggs. Thinking of age is her conscious attribute that enables her to envision the coming death.

Like in *The Call of the Wild*, at the end of the narrative the humanistic attributes of love, reciprocity and sense of responsibility and friendship have been re-justified in the *Charlotte's Web*. To put the human in the upper ranking of the species, the feelings of these things are supposed vital which make human and especially possessed being than others. But, as some critics say, it is not only the human preserve to boast of these qualities. Animals, like Wilbur and Charlotte also can be the model of friendship and loyalty. Critic Fred Erisman in his "Emersonian echoes in E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web*" writes:

Whatever else it may be *Charlotte's Web* is emphatically a chronicle of love and friendship. White himself concedes as much remarking in a 1973 letter that it is a story of friendship, life, death and salvation. . . .The Wilbur, who at

books end pledges his friendship to Charlotte's children and grand children out of devotion to her brilliance beauty and loyalty.(282)

Erismen posits the human like feature of the animals by interpreting it with the humanistic features. He brings love and friendship into consideration while defining the relations between animals. They, like the humans, feel ethical obligation to strengthen the relations with the community members. The fact can be emphasized through the final episode of the novel:

“In a day or two I will be dead.” Hearing this, Wilbur threw himself down in an agony of pain and sorrow. Great shocks racked his body. He leaved and grunted with desolation. “I will not leave you here alone to die”...All winter Wilbur watched over Charlotte's egg sac as though he were guarding his own children...nothing in life was so important as this small round-object-nothing else mattered. (59-61)

The Charlotte who saved Wilbur declared her death which puts Wilbur in great pain and in responsibility. He materializes the meaning of friendship by protecting and hatching Charlotte's eggs. He gets full satisfaction in doing so to repay Charlotte. This episode reminds of the importance of symbiotic relation that human being lack in course of living their lives.

IV. Connecting Human and Animal: A Symbiotic Relation

The Primary purpose of this research was to find out similarities between humans and animals, critique and question human supremacy in the primary texts *The Call of the Wild* and *Charlotte's Web*. It focused on how human being take animals for their consumerist motive, what bio-instinctual traits are shared by them and why this human trend to dominate; to exploit by putting in the centre is unjust. In order to meet the objective, the study observed and analyzed the plots on the ecocritical base with the respective critical and textual insights. The research deducts that there are biological and virtual, visible and invisible, tangible and intangible similarities between both of the species (human and animal); therefore the boundary between them is not scientific and justifiable. Animals do have the tactile, auditory, gustatory, visionary and olfactory senses of perception like humans despite of various physical variables. On these bases, human and animal rather exist for each other than one for another which is a symbiotic relation of equality, justice and co-existence.

The selected novels of Jack London and E.B. White portray and remind of the need for harmony among human and animals, as the later ones fulfill their roles equally with the human characters in the novels. They have subverted human centrality with the cognitive, behavioral or practical performances. The inner qualities of liking, disliking, love, anger, rationality, irrationality, sympathy, empathy, pleasure, pain which human defines as its distinct privileges innately inhibit in the animals, too.

Jack London's *The Call of the Wild* talks about the human purpose in keeping dogs and what do they think about the rest of the animals. It also shows the dog's honesty and fellow-feeling towards their owners. The owner's maltreatment and commercial motive of keeping pets like the dogs are presented in the novel. As mentioned above, the novel demonstrates that Buck (the dog) is kept in a hostile

living to be sold. The master Judge Miller rears Buck to his aesthetic and commercial sense. His son Manuel torments Buck just to satisfy his sadist cause. In the Santa Clara valley of California, Buck cannot stay long as it is stolen and sold away to the north. From beginning to the end of life in Klondike, Buck is dispossessed of its personal life, freedom and happiness. Migration from place to place adds more torment and hardships from the masters. But Buck rarely thinks to disobey and turn malicious to his masters. It demonstrates all the feelings of pain pleasure, love hatred. This is how; London's the *Call of the Wild* exposes human behavior to animal community. It inspires to react with the symbiotic logic to establish the equal status of all by taking animal dignity and subjectivity into consideration.

E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* exposes how human being is cruel to the livestock to satisfy their need. It presents how animals demonstrate mutual help to save from human attack. It shows that nonhuman beings are equally conscious of their safety and other animals can show intra species integrity against external dangers. The growing attitudes of human from innocence to experience, friendly to unfriendly to nonhuman is expressed in the novel to support the idea that human civilization runs on speciesism.

White's *Charlotte's Web* illustrates a close tie of Wilbur and Fern. In their first contact, there appears a good harmony between them. It is because of Fern's innocence in the early childhood. As she gets acquainted with the selfish human nature, she forgets Wilbur gradually. The other people treat pigs in the farm as their commodity to fulfill their economic and consumer desires. They keep on selling, buying and demonstrating the livestock (Pig) with this motive. However, the livestock expect friendly behavior from them, which indicates symbiotic feelings dwelling in animals. There is the exemplary harmony and mutuality among animal characters in

the novel. They support each other to save from human being. Charlotte's drawing – "some pigs" to convince humans not to kill Wilbur, means a good physical effort to stop from being killed. All nonhuman beings tend to communicate in their company and even with the humans by using their respective ways of communication. They express sorrows, pains, despair in time of need. Wilbur's ambition to save from getting slaughtered signals animal desires to live longer like the humans in the earth.

This research lays emphasis on the unity and integrity of both humans animal community for the smooth running of life, equality and justice for all. It is the othering culture of human beings which has brought separation or disintegration with the animal world. For the better, sustainable life, each entity of the earth community has to show respect and reciprocity with the fellow creatures. The realization of this fact will have a remedial value in developing symbiosis in the world that will lead the whole earth community to the path of ecospheric egalitarianism. Therefore, the analysis of the two novels of this research *The Call of the Wild* and *Charlotte's Web* have illustrated that human culture is guided by anthrop materialistic thoughts and that there is the close connection between humans and animals.

At present the whole human efforts are oriented to seek the way out for safe and sustainable existence in the earth. But these efforts made through science and technology, academic plans and discussions, economic campaigns and political missions seem ironical and futile unless human beings realize, assimilate and implement equality, justice and animal rights. This discussion may unfold the ways to fulfill the above mentioned needs by igniting some insights in the interested researchers. It can open the way to study, extend and come up with novice ideas and critical deductions in scholarly pursuits. For this purpose, the eco critical issue has become more relevant and practical than other literary theories. The novels discussed

in this research can further be examined from other dimensions of eco criticism like environmental justice, ecosystem, deep ecology, eco feminism, eco linguistics to bring the debate into light.

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