

I. General Introduction

John Maxwell Coetzee (1940-), better known as J.M. Coetzee, the South African writer, is well-known for his versatile writing and unique style of depicting the characters. Because of his talent, he received the Nobel Prize for literature in 2003 and had already won prestigious Booker Prize twice, for his *Life and Times of Michael K.* in 1983 and for *Disgrace* in 1999 respectively. This research mainly surveys three texts written by Coetzee -- *Disgrace* (1999), *The Lives of Animals* (1999) and *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) -- to bring out his response to human beings' treatment to animals on ethical basis.

Though there are innumerable texts that raise the issue of animal rights or human beings' treatment towards animals, Coetzee's style is totally different from theirs. Almost all such texts that deal with the issue of animal rights, focus on the ecological and other such issues in relation to human beings' treatment towards animals. Contrary to them, J.M. Coetzee, in his texts such as *Disgrace*, *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello* highlights on ethical relationship between human beings and animals. In other words, Coetzee heavily departs from the age old concept of relationship between human beings and animals, and proposes his own 'brand new' concept.

Among the texts selected for this research, *Disgrace* (1999) is a novel whereas the other two texts -- *The Lives of Animals* (1999) and *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) -- are non-fictional texts. There is so much similarity between the latter two texts because two lessons which are included in *Elizabeth Costello*, are adopted from the former book *The Lives of Animals* and both of these texts mainly focus the issue of animal rights.

The new concern introduced by Coetzee in his texts -- human beings' treatment of animals -- is ethical. Coetzee's ethical response is different from the

previous human responses because he tries his best to present a radical method in the way human beings treat animals. His main concern in these texts is that any sympathetic feelings human beings show towards animals should come from their inner heart. In fact love, affection, kindness and sympathy shown towards animals should come from human beings' inner heart. They should not be showy. We should treat animals with due sympathy and love for their "sensation of being" (*Elizabeth Costello* 78). So Coetzee's ethical concern challenges all existing viewpoints on human beings' treatment of animals.

Though J.M. Coetzee is a versatile writer, the texts this research is dealing with are based on a totally different and new theme. Coetzee's most of the novels portray the issue of South African racial conflict between the whites and the blacks and the raw materials for most of his works are supplied by the violent history and politics of his country, especially apartheid. But the issue this research is dealing with is totally different from these common Coetzeean themes. Here, this research surveys how Coetzee handles the issue of animal rights by departing himself from the rest of the writers of animal rights and how he departs himself from his own common topics of writing.

This research analyzes *The Lives of Animals* as its main text. Though other two texts are also the subject of study for this research, they are not as significant as *The Lives of Animals* for the purpose of the present research because the two lessons of *Elizabeth Costello* which are concerned with the issue of animal rights, are extracted from *The Lives of Animals* itself and the next text *Disgrace* has included the animal issue not as the main plot but only as its sub-plot. Coetzee was already a renowned author for being the winner of two Booker Prizes along with other so many prizes and for being the author of best-known books before writing *The Lives of Animals* about the subject matter of animals. But after the publication of *The Lives of*

Animals the critics' attitude to evaluate Coetzee and his views changed and took him as a prominent theoretician of animal rights. Though this book is a document on animal rights, Coetzee has given a fictional turn to it by presenting fictional characters, events and places in it. In 1998 Coetzee was invited by the Princeton University Center for Human Values to deliver a pair of lectures on ethical and philosophical topics but Coetzee shocked the organizers presenting his paper under the title *The Lives of Animals* instead of delivering conventional lectures. There he read to his audience a work about a distinguished fictional Australian novelist, Elizabeth Costello who is invited to Appleton College, a fictitious institution in America (as he himself was invited by Princeton University) to deliver the annual lectures. But she disconcerts her hosts and audience, who expected her to choose a literary topic, by delivering a root-and-branch polemic against the treatment of animals, in zoos, scientific researches and above all their slaughter for the production of food. There, Elizabeth Costello lectures on the importance of animal rights and moral necessity of vegetarianism.

There are so many similarities between Coetzee's two texts -- *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello* -- regarding their theme, both of these texts have Elizabeth Costello, an ageing Australian writer, as his mouthpiece. The one and only theme of *The Lives of Animals* is non other than human concern towards animals as its title suggests and this book is full-fledged document on animal rights, and the second text *Elizabeth Costello* too deals with the same theme as two lessons of this text "The Philosophers and the Animals" and "The Poets and the Animals" are adopted from the former text and the first chapter of the text entitled "Realism" also deals with a story by Franz Kafka about a humanized ape (*Elizabeth Costello* 18-19). Even if Elizabeth Costello has many other issues too, the main concern of the protagonist cum mouthpiece of the author seems to be human treatment of animals. In her most

prolific lecture “The Philosophers and the Animals” and “The Poets and the Animals”, which are there in his both texts, Elizabeth Costello, slams the philosophers and poets for their inhuman portrayal of animal beings. She mainly questions the Cartesian idea of the human being as the only rational being and St. Thomas Aquinas’s idea of soul as the sole possession of human beings alone, and depiction of animals in poems by Rilke and Ted Hughes in their poems. In both of these texts J.M. Coetzee speaks through the mouth of Elizabeth Costello in a sharp tone challenging the centuries old theological, philosophical and literary concern regarding human beings’ inhuman treatment of animals.

For Coetzee, human beings’ oppression of animals -- keeping them in captivity, submitting them to painful or denaturing experiments for (un)scientific cause, and above all breeding them for slaughtering on an industrial scale -- arises from an unwarranted privileging of man and the ‘faculty of reason’. It is because we human beings believe that animals do not have the power of reasoning and self-consciousness coming out of it, i.e. Cartesian 'cogito ergo sum' that we claim the right to dispose of them in our interests. Costello, therefore, attacks reason as a vast tautology. Of course, reason will validate reason as the first principle of the universe. Now, the question arises: what else should we do with reason? The ultimate value of existence is not reason but ‘fullness of being’, which animals enjoy in their natural state. Costello even startles her hosts and other participants (including her son and daughter-in-law) in Appleton College dinner table by saying that her vegetarianism does not come out of moral conviction but “comes out of a desire to save [her own] soul” in an answer for her reason behind being vegetarian (*The Lives of Animals* 3). So, both of these texts are full of passages that show human relationship with animals on ethical basis, and even raise the issue of ethical vegetarianism.

Disgrace (1999), another masterpiece by Coetzee which won the prestigious Booker Prize for the second time, is the third text this research analyzes. The protagonist of the novel, David Lurie, a disgraced professor of English at Cape Technical University in Cape Town, South Africa, was fully accompanied by dogs in his journey into 'disgrace'. That is why, though the central theme of the novel may not be the issue of animals, the protagonist's relationship with dogs is the indispensable part of the novel. There comes a surprising turn in the novel when the protagonist -- a person "corroded with skepticism" -- gets influenced by animals though until he moves out of Cape Town into the country "he has been indifferent" to them (*Disgrace* 102, 143). David's attraction towards animals is neither sudden nor easy; it is neither a desirable outcome nor a quietus. David's coming to animals occur only after his blithely quasi-philosophical statements on the nature of the animals prove wrong once he is forced to encounter real animals in his day-to-day life on his daughter Lucy's smallholding and in her friend Bev's animal refuge, where he begins to work as a volunteer. This turn which in its most profound form involves a veritable becoming animal, occurs only when David is finally forced to abandon all that had hitherto sustained him as a white, liberal, libidinous academician. More than this, it occurs initially by his affair with a colored student, Melanie Issacs and then exacerbated terribly by the gang rape of his daughter by blackmen; when surrounded as he is by abandoned, dying and dead animals -- those whose period of grace is either ending or has ended -- "the first flickering of sympathy and of love seem to ignite within him" (qtd. in Tom Herron 469).

In fact, there are animals everywhere in *Disgrace*. While animals can be found in virtually every page of *Disgrace*, they are often in the process of becoming lost. Neglected, abandoned, attacked, burned- animals are badly in a world in which they "do not own their lives" and in which "they exist to be used" (*Disgrace* 123). Though

most of the animals in the novel end up dead, some of the most moving passages in the text are those which are about animal and especially dogs' death. Lucy, David's daughter, asserts her sympathy towards animals by saying that "on the list of nation's priorities animals come nowhere" and the novel fully works to amplify her assertion (*Disgrace* 73). Neither it is a manifesto of animal rights nor it advocates an appreciation of animals as either a correlative or an alternative to the dark times it so vividly depicts. But as the novel progresses, animals nonetheless emerge from under the shadow cast by the more obviously weighty ethical and political matters invoked by the text, namely the "white dilemma" in post apartheid South Africa; the break down of law and order there; the ethics of silence as a response to black-on-white, male-on-female rape, the notion of historical retribution, the mechanics of land redistribution; the impact of economic rationalization; the status of truth and the possibilities for reconciliation (qtd. in Tom Herron 472). As these concerns threaten to overwhelm David and Lucy to the extent that what seems to be the most appropriate response to "dark times" is to become imperceptible, Lucy suggests David that they need to live without "things" to live "like a dog", then strangely animals proceed into the book's center and crowding the text, animals become the novel's matter (*Disgrace* 205).

But the main concern of this research -- the issue of animals raised in the novel -- is on how the protagonist David learns to love animals ethically. David is presented as a heartless fellow towards animals at the first part of novel when he comes to his daughter's house after he gets disgraced in the university because of his sexual harassment charge of his own student Melanie. Later when he begins volunteering at animal refuge run by Bev Shaw, according to his daughter's suggestion, there comes drastic change in his behaviour. While being close to animals, in looking after them (even when they are dead), in learning from them, and

in dwelling amongst them, David's sympathy, love and kindness become broadened to a remarkable degree. As David descends deeper into his disgrace, he travels alongside the animals that share his fate. He has revelation by feeling the suffering of sick and dying dogs. He sees no difference in his life and the lives of the dying dogs.

Contemplating the fate of these half-starved dogs, he admits of being disturbed. At last, the opera, on which David is spending his time, labor and skill, itself becomes an animal and there comes the final thought in David's mind to perform the opera to the animal audience. So, lastly David shows his ethical love, sympathy and kindness towards dogs by attending himself to any kind of service for animals in the clinic.

It is clear by now that the research involves three texts written by J.M. Coetzee and tries to bring them under a single theme of animal rights. Wide range of critics, researchers, scholars and reviewers have delivered so many criticisms and reviews from different perspectives regarding different aspects of the texts. These approaches have tried their best to interpret these texts or make these texts meaningful. But the approach this research applies heavily differs from those previous approaches in a sense that this research analyzes these texts on the basis of human beings' ethical relationship with animals.

Oliver Herford comments on the depiction of Elizabeth Costello in Coetzee's two texts *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello*:

Costello is impatient of the proprieties of public argumentation preferring to think in similitude rather than reason things out. This is a novelist's failing, perhaps, but it occasions some spectacular lapses. She starts, too, from positions of provoking extremity [. . .] but passes rapidly from violent identification to a blank disbelief in what she is undertaken to say. Elizabeth Costello is a thin, disagreeable character and an obvious contrivance- an unreliable surrogate whose obsessions

and inconsistencies are conventionally opposed but never effectually challenged. She does not stay even to answer her own idle self-questioning, of which there is an exasperating amount. ("J.M. Coetzee: Elizabeth Costello", 11)

Here, the critic shows the failure of the novelist while depicting his mouthpiece in his texts. His failure in this department is further forwarded by another critic Martha Clifford as She says:

Costello has forgotten the context and has freely interpreted the passages to mean whatever she wants it to mean. She has imposed a tyranny of her own private meanings on everyone and everything. Her empathy is actually the narcissistic projection of one's own self on to the faces of the downtrodden, a common ailment of terminally myopic. ("Costello in Texts", 8)

So, Martha Clifford takes Elizabeth Costello not purely ethical but narcissistic woman whose activities, according to her, are colored by self-centeredness.

Many things have been said regarding the depiction of Coetzee's authorial persona, Elizabeth Costello, by real author J.M. Coetzee. But whatever these critics say, Coetzee's intention is not to decrease the value of Costello as a writer. Perhaps, Coetzee wishes to separate literature from the realm of debate saying that writers are not the sort to participate in arguments. They are best left alone to write their books which then the public can make sense of. But beyond that, Coetzee makes a statement on how dangerous it is to take authors at their intent and at their literal meaning.

Regarding the narrative style of Coetzee and his way of presenting the issue in his texts *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello*, critic David Lodge comments:

The Tanner Lectures were published by Princeton University Press in 1999 with an introduction by a political philosopher and responses

from four other distinguished members of Princeton faculty. Not surprisingly most of the commentators felt somewhat stymied by Coetzee's meta-lectures, by the veils of fiction behind which he had concealed his own position from scrutiny. There was a feeling, shared by some reviewers of the book, that he was putting forward an extreme, intolerant, and accusatory argument without taking full intellectual responsibility for it. ("Disturbing the Peace", 10)

In the same article, Lodge further questions the genre of the text *Elizabeth Costello* calling it prose rather than a novel. He opines:

So what are we to make of the whole extraordinary book? Its first lesson, it will be remembered, was that all texts are now open to infinite interpretations; but in spite of deconstruction, we persist in trying to discern some kind of communicative intention in works of literature, for they do not come into existence by accident. The choice of a renaissance voice to end this one is interesting. In its mixture of realistic narrative, myth, controversial polemic, Platonic dialogue, erotic interludes, and gossipy allusions to fellow writers, it is more like a Renaissance prose work rather than the average modern novel.

("Disturbing the Peace", 10)

In this extract Lodge points out the possibility of the infinite interpretations in open-ended texts of Coetzee.

These criticisms, on the writing style of Coetzee, may be true to some extent but it should not be taken as the only one. A reviewer John Banville writes:

This is [an] [. . .] unsatisfactory book that nevertheless, and despite its faults, resonates in the mind long after it has been put aside. Coetzee is addressing the predicament of artist in the Post-Modern-not the

postmodern-age, when all the certainties seem to have gone, when the word mirror is in piece. ("Being and Nothingness", 34)

Thus, for all these critics who blame Coetzee as a weak author in terms of his narrative style and portrayal of his character what can be said is that the style and the characters he chooses are appropriate to convey his animal rights theme because both of the texts are documents on ethical relationship between human and animal beings rather than other social, political and cultural issues.

Though it is mentioned in above passages that there is similarity between Coetzee's two texts *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello*, David H. Lynn in his article compares these two texts written almost on same issue and shows difference existing there:

But the full difference of *Elizabeth Costello* from *The Lives of Animals* lies in a shifting of focus from idea to character. Beyond justice to the clash of competing moral imperatives, Coetzee dramatizes the internal moral struggle of Elizabeth Costello herself. In a tradition tracing back to Balzac and Dickens, such struggle, such suffering, culminates in a character's self-awareness on the one hand and her three-dimensional depth for the reader on the other. In other words, as a character located in a specific historical moment, and even more important, a period of interpretation, discovery and change in her own life, Elizabeth Costello is the idea about the lives of animals that has come to possess her and alienate her from her family and the world. The idea becomes character and it becomes dilemma. ("Love and Death, and Animals Too", 127)

The critic here argues that though the ideas presented in these two texts are similar, *The Lives of Animals* totally focuses on the personal idea of Coetzee, whereas *Elizabeth Costello* is little bit inclined to the fictional character.

Another critic Herald Leusmann draws parallel between Coetzee's two protagonists - David Lurie from *Disgrace* and Elizabeth Costello from *Elizabeth Costello*:

It becomes obvious that Coetzee has described protagonists with great sympathy and deep imagery in both *Disgrace* and *Elizabeth Costello*; protagonists who turn away from writing and our civilization with metaphysical radicalism. *Disgrace* already went beyond the realms of the politically critical South African novel. And *Elizabeth Costello* confirms that, for years now, Coetzee has been developing a cultural critique that was not visible in his earlier works. ("J.M. Coetzee's Cultural Critique", 64)

Leusmann lauds Coetzee for his ability to depict the character in his texts. He opines that Coetzee is shifting his style of depicting character but that shift has made his style more polished and refined than before.

There are numerous criticisms by wide range of critics on various issues raised in *Disgrace*. Some critics take it as an 'anti-apartheid novel' and some others criticize it for its depiction of negative picture of South African society. Likewise, Michael Kochin finds pessimistic tone in this novel: "A novel by J.M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* is [. . .] a book about endings; the end of morality and the end of humanity. [I]t presents a world dying without hope." ("Perspectives on Political Science", 4-5). These critics have criticized Coetzee only on the basis of his biographical facts like his stance as a white South African writer. But they have to go beyond this surface level analysis to catch Coetzee's real standpoint. Moreover, Coetzee wants the readers to read his texts critically as he is not only confined to be a South African writer, but rather he is a universally acclaimed post-modernist writer who realizes the role of readers for the interpretation of the text.

Critic Mike Marais discovers shift in the nature of the protagonist David Lurie. He finds a wide gap between the nature of the protagonist in the early and the late part of novel:

An initial reading of *Disgrace* would seem to suggest that the character Lurie undergoes a similar development from monadic subjectivity to self-substituting responsibility in the course of this novel. On the most obvious levels, he learns to love in the course of the novel. ("The Possibility of Ethical Action: J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*", 62)

Marais, in his article points out the obvious point of the novel. In fact, there is so much transformation in Lurie's behavior in the first and the second part and it can be traced even by a careless reader.

So, it is clear from the above-mentioned criticisms, reviews and commentaries that so many issues are there in these three texts by Coetzee which are open to be analyzed from different perspectives. But this research takes none of these perspectives, rather goes for a totally different one, i.e. human beings' ethical concern towards animals. The researcher in this research will try to focus the issue of animals in relation to human beings. Furthermore, this research will also try to bring out how J.M. Coetzee departs from the conventional viewpoints on relationship between human beings and animals, and how he proposes a new approach of treating animals by human beings which is based upon moral and ethical ground. Even it will be analyzed in the succeeding chapters that how a morally corrupt human being like David Lurie can change himself after he feels the suffering of dying sick dogs.

As the present researcher in the succeeding chapter is going to analyze Coetzee's ethical concern on relation between humans and animals, it would be better to make a general survey on relations between human and animals before Coetzee. To

talk about the burning issue of animal rights or relation between human beings and animals, it can be traced back to the earliest philosophers.

In the ancient time practice of animal sacrifice was so much popular that this practice was integral part of the ancient people's ritual -- both in happiness and grief -- in name of pleasing the God. Furthermore, animals were the readymade meal for those wandering people who were unknown to the practice of agricultural system. But in the sixth century BC, Pythagoras, the prominent Greek philosopher and Mathematician, who has been called the first animal rights philosopher, urged respect for all kinds of animals because he believed in the transmigration of souls between human and non-human animals. He opined that “[i]n killing an animal, we might be killing an ancestor” (qtd. in Singer 1). This idea of transmigration of soul is still prevalent in some religions such as Hindu, Buddha and Christian. Pythagoras advocated vegetarianism and rejected the practice of killing animals for food purposes, and even condemned the use of animals for religious sacrifices. So, he became the first to speak for the harmonious relationship between human beings and the animals.

Later, Aristotle, the first systematic western philosopher, in the fourth century BC challenged this idea of Pythagoras and said: “Non-human animals are ranked far below the human beings in the 'Great Chain of Being' because of their alleged irrationality” (qtd. in Singer 1). By saying so he created a wide gap in the relationship between human beings and animals in terms of faculty of reason. He opined that animals have no interests of their own and they cannot think about the right and wrong of themselves. But Theophrastus, one of the pupils of Aristotle, disagreed with Aristotle's viewpoint. He was of the opinion that killing animals, eating their meat and getting pleasure is unjust on the ground that this process robbed animals of their lives. “Non-human animals”, he said, “can reason, sense and feel just as human

beings do” (qtd. in Singer 3). But his opinion was listened by none because he was not as famous and renowned as Aristotle. So, Aristotle's view that human beings and animals exist in different moral realms because one is rational while the other is not, remained unchallenged for many centuries.

In the Renaissance period, Renaissance humanists like Pico della Mirandola and other humanists focused their argument on distinctive human dignity. They based their estimate of human dignity on the idea that “[m]an possessed the central and pivotal position in the 'Great Chain of Being' that led from the lowliest forms of matter to God himself” (qtd. in Singer 4). These humanists, while deconstructing the position of God, only focused on human beings but there was no place for the rest of the non-human beings. Later in the seventeenth century, French rationalist Rene Descartes argued that “Animals have no souls or minds and are nothing but complex automata” (qtd. in Singer 4). According to Descartes, they, therefore cannot think or even feel pain. He further added that though they do have sensory equipment and can see, hear and touch, and may even feel anger and fear but they completely lack rational faculty of mind. His famous and much quoted line 'cogito ergo sum' clearly indicates rational faculty as the main determinant faculty to distinguish human beings from animals. He was of the opinion that human beings are superior to animals because 'they can think' but animals cannot and are not conscious of what is happening to them, humans can do anything to animals. This one-sided opinion of Descartes was the continuation of the Aristotelian and Renaissance humanists' view and they overall termed animal beings as third class mindless things.

But latter on, in the Eighteenth century Jean Jacques Rousseau in the preface of his book *Discourse on Inequality* (1754) wrote against Descartes. In that book he wrote, “Man starts as an animal, though not one devoid of intellect and freedom” (qtd. in Singer 6). However, as animals are sensitive beings they too ought to participate in

natural right, and man is subject to some duties towards them, and specifically one has the right not to be uselessly mistreated by the other. In this way, Rousseau spoke for the rights of animals challenging the existing views on relationship between human and animal.

Later in the eighteenth century one of the founders of the modern utilitarianism, English philosopher Jeremy Bentham, argued that, “Animal pain is as real and as morally relevant as human pain and that the day may come when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholden from them but by the hand of tyranny” (qtd. in Noske 52). He further said that the ability to suffer not the ability to reason, must be the benchmark of how we treat other beings. If the ability to reason were the criterion, many human beings, including babies and disabled people would also have to be treated as though they were things.

In the nineteenth century, Arthur Schopenhauer, a prominent philosopher, opined that “[n]on-human animals have the same essence as humans despite lacking the faculty of reason” (qtd. in Noske 78). Although he considered vegetarianism to be only supererogatory, he argued for consideration to be given to animals in morality, and he opposed vivisection. His critique of Kantian ethics contains a lengthy and often furious polemic against the exclusion of animals in his moral system.

In this way, so many philosophers have given numerous opinions regarding the position and relationship between human beings and animals. Some are on the side of the animals but most of them are against it. In 1824, world’s first animal welfare organization was established in Britain which was named **Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals** and later similar groups soon sprang up elsewhere in Europe and then in North America. In the USA, first such group named **American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals** was founded in New York in

1866. Later the concept of animal rights spread rapidly and it became the subject matter of innumerable text books. In 1892 English social reformer Henry Salt wrote an influential book titled *Animal Rights Considered in Relation to Social Progress* on animal right issue.

By the twentieth and early twenty-first century, animal welfare societies and laws against cruelty to animals existed in almost every country in the world. Specialized animal advocacy groups also proliferated, including those dedicated to the preservation of endangered species and other such as **People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)** that protested against painful or brutal methods of hunting animals, the mistreatment of animals raised for foods in factory farms, and the use of animals in scientific and other experiments and as means of entertainment in the circus. Today, **PETA** is the largest organization in the world working for the rights of animals with more than 1.6 million members and has access to many countries of the world. The main goal of **PETA** is to educate policymakers and public about animal abuse and promote kind treatment of animals, and now it is on the verge of meeting its goal.

The modern animal rights movement can be traced back to the 1970s. In the early 1970s, a group of Oxford philosophers started questioning whether the moral status of non-human animals was necessarily inferior to that of human beings. The group included the psychologist Richard D. Ryder who became a contributor to the influential book *Animals, Men and Morals: An Inquiry Into the Maltreatment of Non-humans*. It was in a review of this book that Peter Singer put forward the basic arguments based on utilitarianism and drew an explicit comparison between women's liberation and animal liberation that in 1975 became *Animal Liberation*, the book often referred to as the 'Bible' of the animal rights movement. Later, in the 1980s and 90s the movement was joined by a wide variety of academicians and professional

groups, including theologians, lawyers, physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, veterinarians, pathologists and former vivisectionists. Animal right is the concept that some basic rights for animals ought to be enshrined in law. The animal-rights view rejects the concept that animals are merely capital goods or property intended for the benefit of humans. The animal-rights philosophy does not necessarily maintain that human and animal beings should be granted the equal rights. For example, it does not call for voting rights for animals but what the animal-rights advocates opine is that the animal beings should be granted the basic rights of a living being, i.e. right to live on their own choice.

However, the animal-rights debate is complicated by the difficulty of establishing clear-cut distinction on which to base moral and political judgments. The default human-animal relationship is deeply rooted in pre-history and tradition but arguments for animal rights are questionable due to basic human inability to understand the subjective state of animals in question. Opponents of animal rights have attempted to identify morally relevant differences between humans and animals that might justify the attribution of rights and interests to the former but not to the latter. Various distinguishing features of humans have been proposed, including the possession of soul, the ability to use language, self-consciousness, a high level of intelligence and the ability to recognize the rights and interests of others. However, such criteria face the difficulty that they do not seem to apply to all and only humans; each may apply either to some but not to all humans, or to all humans but also to some animals.

Noted activist of animal rights and ideological founder of today's animal liberation movement, Peter Singer says that animals' moral status is not based on the concept of rights but on the utilitarian principle of equal consideration of interests. His 1975 book *Animal Liberation* argues that humans grant moral consideration to other

humans not on the basis of intelligence (instance of children or the morally disabled), on the ability to moralize (criminal and the insane) or any other attribute that is inherently human but rather on their ability to experience suffering (*Animal Liberation*, 32). As animals also experience suffering, he argues that excluding animals from such consideration is a form of discrimination.

Another animal-right activist Tom Reagan opines that non-human animals, as 'subjects-of-a-life', are bearer of rights like humans do. He argues that because the moral rights of human beings are based on their possession of certain cognitive abilities, and because these abilities are also possessed by at least some other non-human animals, such animals must have the same moral rights as humans. So, what can be said is that the main message all of these animal-right activists try to convey is we should treat the animal beings as we treat the fellow human beings.

But, some other animal-right activists who deliver their arguments on the side of vegetarianism are of the opinion that for the great majority of human beings, especially in urban, industrialized societies, the most direct form of contact with members of other species is at meal times- while eating them and while doing so we treat them purely as means to our ends. We regard their life and well being as subordinate to our taste for a particular kind of dish. They argue that there can be no defense of eating flesh in terms of fulfilling nutritional needs, since it has been established beyond doubt that we could fulfill need for protein and other essential nutrients far more efficiently with a diet that replaces animal flesh by soybeans and other high protein vegetables products. Our practice of rearing and killing other animals in order to eat them is a clear instance of the sacrifice of most important interests of other beings in order to satisfy trivial interests of our own. They further suggest, to avoid speciesism we must stop this practice and each of us has a moral obligation to cease the killing of animals.

So, it is clear that in these days the issue of animal rights or the relationship between the human and animal being is not a trivial issue. The issue of how the rational human beings should treat animals is now drawing the attention of varied fields of studies. Animal-rights liberation is getting momentum as much as other movements like women-right movement and Black-right movement, and by now it is parallel to the human-right movement. Even, this animal-rights issue is formally legalized by creating laws about it. Now, there are criminal laws against cruelty to animals in some countries of Europe and America. This law regulates the keeping of animals in cities and on farms, regulates the transit of animals internationally, and governs quarantine and inspection provisions. These laws are desired to offer animals some protection from unnecessary physical harm and to regulate the use of animals as food, but they offer no civil rights to animals. Some countries like Switzerland and Germany have decided to recognize animals as 'beings' rather than 'things' through the parliament. Brazil has advanced legislation since 1988 and its constitution recognizes the protection of animals against cruelty. Today, legal arguments in favor of animal rights are powerfully assisted by increasingly sophisticated scientific investigations into the cognitive, emotional and social capacities of animals and by advances in genetics, neuroscience, physiology, linguistics, psychology, evolution and ethology, many of which have demonstrated that humans and animals share a broad range of behaviors, capacities and genetic materials.

This research so far has made a general survey on how philosophers and other general people from ancient period to the present have been treating animals or how they have been generalizing the existence of animal beings. We can conclude from this survey that now human beings are increasing their sympathy and kindness towards animals and accepting the existence of animals as that of their own. The

researcher in the following chapters is going to analyze how J.M. Coetzee departs from the existing viewpoints on the relationship between human beings and animals.

II. Coetzee's Ethical Response to Animal Rights:

A Study of *The Lives of Animals*, *Elizabeth Costello* and *Disgrace*

Coetzee on Relationship Between Human and Animal Beings

Though J. M. Coetzee has long been hailed as a powerful but controversial if often oblique commentator on ravages of apartheid and most of his writings largely deal with the problems of African community -- both during apartheid and after it -- he is a theoretician of animal rights too. Coetzee, one of the most consequential writers of our time, has taken up the issue of human exploitation and abuse of animals such that no other mainstream writers of modern literature are able to do. So, he is arguably the first modern writer to take the issue of relationship between human and animal beings seriously. Concern about human treatment of animals is the primary focus in his most recent texts and more or less in his previous texts too.

But it is not to say that Coetzee is the only writer to raise this issue of relationship between humans and animals. Rather his style of presenting this issue heavily departs from others who include animals centrally in their texts. Although many modern writers succeeded in granting subjectivity to animals who appear in their works, few (if any) of their human characters exhibit the intense empathetic identification with animal suffering and loss of dignity as do Coetzee's human characters. That is what makes his works so original and groundbreaking in the area of fictional treatment of human-animal relations.

Most of the writings of J. M. Coetzee deal with the issue of human and animal relationship -- whether it be fiction or non-fiction. This is to say that one of the important themes of Coetzee's texts is human-animal relation. Though he has been raising this issue in his different texts so differently, the crux point of his writings is the same. Coetzee is on the side of human beings' ethical treatment towards animals. Time and again he repeats in his texts that we should treat animals in the way we treat

our fellow human beings for they do feel the pain and suffering, they possess the soul and they also do have some degree of rational faculty as human beings do. Through different characters in different styles, Coetzee has been delivering his personal opinions about animals. Indeed, all the characters in Coetzee's texts who speak for humanity, kindness and sympathy towards animals, can be taken as the direct reflection of Coetzee's own. In a nutshell, the persona Coetzee creates in his texts to speak for the rights of animals is no other person but Coetzee himself. Coetzee, himself being a vegetarian, raises a question in his texts: are vegetarians trying to save animals or are they trying to save themselves?

While talking about J. M. Coetzee and his stance on animal rights, one should go back to 1980. In his novel *Waiting for the Barbarians* written in 1980, he has clearly hinted the human beings' inhumanity towards animals. In this novel he depicts the pitiable condition of the barbarian (treated in this text as animal) and the animal itself. The novel is full of hunting, as it is the main hobby of the emperors and imperialism. But, the most dramatic turn of the novel occurs in a hunting scene where the protagonist of the novel, Magistrate, finds out that he cannot kill a waterbuck he has in his sight and because of this event his role changes from a victimizer to one of the victims of imperialism and so called rational human society. Later, when he is accused of siding with the barbarians and even his failure to kill the waterbuck he has to face a public shaming and he turns to be one of the scorned and despised as those barbarians and animals. Coetzee presents this scene in the text to expose how human beings treat the animals and how those who show compassion towards animals are treated by the human society. The novel is full of hunting and killing of animals and most of all Magistrate's compassion towards animals. Coetzee furthers this idea of human cruelty towards animals in his other texts too. In his first Booker Prize winning novel *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983), the protagonist Michael K is often linked

to animals and develops a benign, respectful relationship to the natural world. The chicken killing scene in his another novel *Age of Iron* (1990) is enough to show us that his sympathy is not confined to human pain, and if the chief problem for animals, when it comes to suffering, is that they cannot ask for mercy, the inarticulateness of Coetzee's damaged Michael K is enough to show us that animals are not always alone in this. The opening incident in Coetzee's memoir *Boyhood* (1997) recounts the revulsion at a grisely operation his mother on some hens. "The hens shriek and struggle, their eyes bulging [. . .] shudders and [. . .] turns away" (2). But, in his most recent works Coetzee largely raises the issue of animal rights and the three texts that this research is dealing with are the absolute proofs of this statement.

So, what can be said about Coetzee's attempt to raise the issue of human-animal relationship in his texts is that he is trying to give a genuine and specific message of ethical response towards animals by human beings. In an interview conducted in the early 1990s, Coetzee acknowledged that the suffering body is a kind of 'epistemological touchstone' in his worldview a point of authenticity that is immune in a sense to skepticism to doubt. "The body with its pain", he states "becomes a counter to the endless trials of doubts [. . .] not grace, then, suffering body; the suffering body takes this authority; that is its power. To use other words its power is undeniable" (*Doubling the Point*, 248). Coetzee adds parenthetically, "I as a person [. . .] am overwhelmed [. . .] by the fact of suffering in the world, and not only the human suffering" (*Doubling the Point*, 248). Thus, Coetzee accords the suffering body an authenticity and authority that supersede rational knowledge. He comes close to revising the Cartesian formula to read "I feel pain, therefore I exist" but he claims not to "assert the ethical superiority of pain over pleasure" (*Doubling the Point*, 248).

In a speech given to an interaction program *Voiceless: I feel therefore I am* on 22 February, 2007 Coetzee argues that the current animal right movement should

target their campaign to all those individuals who consume animal products by murdering them rather than factory farms and slaughterhouses. He is of the opinion that first of all we should change our mentality from our inner heart regarding our relationship with animals. Every single individual should consider the animals as their fellow beings. He further opines that after we revise our current attitude towards animal beings those slaughterhouses and factory farms will be closed automatically. Though the creatures on whose behalf human beings are speaking are unaware of what their benefactors are up to and unlikely, to thank them, we should treat them as our fellow beings as we are the advanced creatures of the universe.

Coetzee's treatment of the animal issue suggests that although he is not an overtly political writer, he is not, as some have charged, as evasive one; on the contrary, he is acutely aware of the realities of creatural sufferings and addresses attendant ethical issues fortnightly. Therefore, Coetzee along with his protagonists allegorically represent humanity and kindness towards animals. In fact, through his so many texts, interviews and speeches regarding the relationship between human and animal beings, Coetzee opines that the human beings' inability and unwillingness to change themselves is the ultimate 'disgrace'.

Ethical Relation between Human Beings and Animals in *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello*

The Lives of Animals by J. M. Coetzee is a short non-fiction written in a novella form about animal-rights or human-animal relationship issue. This small book is originally tanner lectures given by the writer, Coetzee in 1997-98 at Princeton University, and later published as a book in 1999 along with special commentaries by four commentators and editorial by the editor, Amy Gutman. As the title itself suggests, the book or the collection of lectures mainly concerns with the lives of

animals and focuses on an important ethical issue -- the way human beings treat animals. Coetzee gives fictional touch to this lecture by introducing a fictional novelist Elizabeth Costello who delivers the lectures in the text as mouthpiece of Coetzee.

Elizabeth Costello, the next non-fiction by Coetzee, portrays the flamboyant character Elizabeth Costello as its centerpiece. Elizabeth Costello is everywhere in the book. Mainly the book is divided into eight lessons where protagonist Elizabeth Costello espouses different philosophical perspectives on cruelty and human condition in a series of fictionalized lectures. But, the main issue raised by the protagonist here in this text is also human-animal relationship. In particular she takes on the question of human cruelty to animals and prioritizes this particular issue throughout the text.

The present researcher in this research is analyzing these two texts by J.M. Coetzee under a single topic because the main part of *Elizabeth Costello* -- which was actually delivered by the author as his Princeton Tanner Lectures -- is derived from the first text *The Lives of Animals*. A pair of lessons -- "The Philosophers and the Animals" and "The Poets and the Animals" -- that are there in *Elizabeth Costello* have originally appeared in *The Lives of Animals* as Tanner Lectures. These two lessons are the main parts of this research.

Both of the texts portrays the sixty-seven years old fictional philosopher Elizabeth Costello as the central character the text. The whole event revolves round her. At the beginning of the chapter "The Lives of Animals - The Philosophers and the Animals", John is waiting his mother Elizabeth Costello at the airport. This prolific writer is there for her visit to Appleton College where her son John along with his wife is teaching. They reach his apartment and the first confrontation between Costello and her daughter-in-law begins right from suppertime. When Costello does

not notice her grandchildren in the supper table, she asks the reason for that with her daughter-in-law. And, the answer was as expected by Costello. It was the turn of her son. He says "Mother [. . .] the children are having chicken for supper that's the only reason" (60). This is the point from where the animal issue enters the text. Actually, Costello's son and daughter-in-law are known to the fact that she does not like to see meat on the table. So they do not bring their children to their table because their children are having chicken for dietary reason in the supper and Norma (her daughter-in-law) does not want to change the diet food taken by her children.

The supper table discussion reveals the conflict between these two to the front. Norma considers Costello's books as over rated. She thinks, "[H]er opinion on animals, animal consciousness and ethical relations with animals are jejune and sentimental" (61). This is to say that Norma simply does not like the choice Costello makes or the topic Costello chooses for discussion.

Then, she begins her job. She starts her lecture and from the very beginning she starts talking about Red Peter, an educated ape referring to Franz Kafka and his story 'Report to an Academy'. She makes everyone amazed when she compares herself with the educated ape, Red Peter: "On that occasion I felt a little like Red Peter myself" (62). But in the next paragraph she corrects it as light-hearted remarks: "The comparison I have just drawn between myself and Kafka's ape might be taken as such a light-hearted remark" (62). Again, Costello confuses the readers when she comments: "I want to say [. . .] that was not how my remark [. . .] that I feel like Red Peter-was intended [. . .]. It means what it says" (62). Here, Coetzee's Costello clarifies the remarks she made at the beginning of the lectures. She means that when she states that she feels like the ape, she truly feels like the ape. It is her attempt to illustrate the overlap between humans and animals. It is because there is humanity in animals, but even more essentially there is animality in humans. We are animals,

specifically mammals and we can feel like an ape because we are apes- human apes. So, she is right to connect human relationship with the ape.

Thus, she enters her main issue -- the issue related with the lives and deaths of animal beings. Though she speaks of “skipping a recital of the horrors of that lives and deaths” (63), she strongly speaks about it. She herself accepts "that the horrors [she] here omits are nevertheless at the center of this lecture" (65). Costello now begins a new talk. The kind of talk to which she refers is an analogy, which she draws again and again throughout several pages. The analogy is a violent one. It is between the way her fellow human beings treat animals and the way the Third Reich Nazis treated the Jews. She compares the killing of animals and the slaughterhouses with killing of Jews and the Nazi concentration camps: “They went like sheep to the slaughter.” “They died like animals.” “The Nazi butchers killed them [. . .] the crime of the Third Reich, says the voice of accusation, was to treat people like animals" (65).

She is so angry with the human beings’ behavior that she exposes all the animality of humans. “By treating fellow human beings, beings created in the image of God, like beasts.” She says of the inhuman Nazis, “They had themselves become beasts" (65). She continues:

We are surrounded by an enterprise of degradation, cruelty and killing which rivals anything that the Third Reich was capable of, indeed dwarfs it in that ours is an enterprise without end, self-regenerating, bringing rabbits, rats, poultry, livestock ceaselessly into the world for the purpose of killing them. (65)

She heavily attacks the meat industry, drug-testing laboratories, factory farms and abattoirs around the city areas that expose the most dangerous scene of death and cruelty -- the killing of animal beings.

And, she reaches the crux of her lectures. Her lecture titled “The Philosophers and the Animals” is about how the great western philosophers (mis) used the language and dominated the whole animal beings. She criticizes those philosophers who focused their philosophy only on human norms and values:

Such a language is available to me I know. It is the language of Aristotle, and Porphyry, of Augustine and Aquinas, of Descartes and Bentham, of in our day, Mary Midgley and Tom Ragan. It is a philosophical language in which we can discuss and debate what kinds of souls animals have whether they reason or on the contrary as biological automatons. (66)

It is where she begins her arguments. Reason is the point of departure she makes with the philosophers who highlighted the faculty of reason owned by human beings. One by one, she criticizes all those philosophers who consider human beings as greatest of all beings because they possess the reason faculty. First of all, she raises the question over St. Thomas Aquinas’s argument that “because man alone is made in the image of god and partakes in the being of God, how we treat animals is on no importance” (67).

And, Aquinas is not the only person who opined so. Other prominent philosophers like Aristotle and Descartes also praised this reason faculty of human beings. They thought, "The universe is built upon reason" and for them “God is a god of reason” (67). This is to say, "reason and the universe are same" (67). Their motive is so clear. They want to give no space to the animals by prioritizing the reason which they say animals lack as she forwards:

The universe is built upon reason. God is God of reason [. . .]. And the fact that animals, lacking reason, can not understand the universe but have simply to follow its rules blindly proves that, unlike man, they are

part of it but not part of its being; that man is god like, animals thing like. (67)

Costello here in this extract rightly points out that today human beings compare everything in terms of reason and they do not value animals because they think that animals lack that reasoning faculty.

But, Costello is not ready to accept this faulty logic easily. After all she is also a much experienced and matured writer having wide popularity all over. For this flamboyant lady "reason is neither the being of the universe nor the being of the God" (67). Rather for her, "reason is the being of a certain spectrum of human thinking" (67). So, she does not want to surrender herself before the discourse of the old philosophers and go for what they said long time back. Reason, for her, is not a determining factor for being superior or inferior creature. Dismissing the dominant rationalistic philosophical arguments pro and con animal rights, she claims, "[R]eason is simply a vast tautology... reason will validate reason as the first principle of the universe" (70).

She raises the issue of rights to animals on her lectures, she says, at least the great apes -- who share the faculty of reason with human beings to some extent -- should be accorded human rights. Here, she does not demand all the rights enjoyed by common human beings but "at least those rights or that we accord mentally defective specimens of the species *Homo sapiens*; the right to life, the right not to be subjected to pain or harm, the right to equal protection before law" because the mentally defective person does not owe reasoning faculty greater than the apes (70). At this point of her lectures, she exposes a picture of how human beings treat the rest of the beings. Even though some of the human beings are mentally dead and physically handicapped having no rationality power, they are considered superior to the animals

and are expected to enjoy the basic rights common to human beings but hesitate to grant it to the animal beings.

For those people who doubt the rational faculty of the animals and the apes in general, Costello presents an experiment that tests the reasoning power of the apes. Wolfgang Kohler, a psychologist and scientist published a monograph entitled "The Mentality of Apes" in 1917 describing his experiments with an ape named Sultan. What that experiment proved is that apes also do have rational faculty and they utilize it if they need it. But, why they do not utilize it as we human beings do is that they lack the language we have or they do not understand our language. Narrating Kohler's paper she opines, "Animals cannot march, he means to say, they cannot dress up because they do not know the meaning of *march*, do not know the meaning of *dress up*" (74).

Next, she challenges another philosopher named Thomas Nagel who became famous by posing a question "what is it like to be a bat?" (75). Costello counters philosopher Thomas Nagel's contention that although we imagine what it would be like to be a bat, we can never truly be a bat, just as a bat can never know what it is to be human. We lack the mind of the bat as it lacks ours. Further, she retorts that we both have souls, have being and that we can think ourselves into the being of another. She says, "To be alive is to be a living soul. An animal - and we all are animals - is an embodied soul" (78). This is where she criticizes Descartes. She says that Descartes totally denied the idea that animals do have embodied soul. For Descartes, "An animal lives as a machine lives [. . .] if it has a soul, it has one in the same way that a machine has a battery [. . .] that the animal is not an embodied soul" (78).

Costello even attacks the quotation delivered by Descartes: "Cogito ergo sum". She says, "It is a formula I have been always uncomfortable with. It implies that a living being that does not do what we call thinking, is somehow second class" (78).

And, it is the obvious point where she hits back at Descartes. In fact, Descartes' line 'cogito ergo sum' or 'I think therefore I am' is the faulty one. He says that his existence has relation with the rational power or those who do not have thinking power they do not have existence. But, Costello totally opposes it: "To thinking, cognition, I oppose fullness, embodiedness, the sensation of being" (78). For Costello, every living being has existence because they have sensation of being, either they are human beings or the animals. This is her attempt to show that animals are not inferior to human because both have same sensation of being. But, it is only her attempt to prove the animals equal to the humans. Actually, human beings never think that they have something in common -- reason, self-consciousness or soul -- with other animals. So, they treat the animals as they wish because they consider themselves to be superior to animals. Costello opines, "With the corollary that, if we do not have similarity with animals, then we are entitled to treat them as we like, imprisoning them, killing them, dishonoring their corpses" (79).

Costello categorizes human beings in terms of sympathy they show to others. Present human beings do have sympathy but "they closed their hearts" (79). For Costello there are different sorts of human beings: "There are people who have the capacity to imagine themselves as someone else, there are people who have no such capacity [. . .] and there are people who have the capacity but choose not to exercise it" (79). Again, at the end of her lectures she returns to previous point of discussion -- her comparison of slaughterhouses with holocaust: "I return one last time to the places of death all around us, the places of slaughter to which, in a huge communal effort, we close our hearts. Each day a fresh holocaust, yet as far as I can see, our moral being is untouched" (80).

So her repetitive focus on the comparison between the animal slaughterhouses with holocaust is the reason why she so much hates the human beings who kill the

animal beings for their petty interest. And, her example also can be taken as an urge to whole human generation to stop such needless practices and treat the animals as a being equal to them, not the inferior.

After her lectures ended, there is a question-answer section. A man asks Costello to be clearer about her arguments and asks what is the overall gist of her lectures. She responds him by saying “Open your heart and listen to what your heart says” (82). And, she further adds we should understand the feelings of the animals with whom we are dealing with, by reminding what Montaigne said regarding this: “Montaigne said: We think we are playing with cat but how do we know that the cat is not playing with us? I wish I could think the animals in our laboratories are playing with us. But alas, it isn’t so” (82).

This is another striking point she quotes from Montaigne. We do not think what the animals think while we are playing with them anywhere or we never try to respect their feelings. We never try to understand that while we are in communion with them they are enjoying with us or not. So, Costello here urges all human beings to respect the feelings of animals.

At the dinner table all the participants discuss on various subject matters that Costello raises on her lectures related to the nature of human beings regarding animals. One of the points they discuss is related to the animal sacrifices to the Gods. A participant named Wunderlich says that human beings invented the sacrificial offerings just to consume the meat by themselves in the name of God: “They made a sacrificial offering, gave a percentage to the Gods, hoping thereby to keep the rest” (86). Costello too supports this point and adds that “[p]erhaps we invented Gods so that we could put the blame on them. They gave us permission to eat flesh [. . .]. It is not our fault, it’s theirs. We are just their children” (86).

Costello seems quite adamant on her point. Actually regarding this sacrificial practice, we show such kind of behavior that this practice can easily be doubted. We offer the animals to the Gods to fulfil our countless wishes but do not offer the whole body of that sacrificed animal to the God. We bring it home and eat. So, this sacrificial practice seems nothing more than a drama just to fulfil our meat eating desire. We bring the God in-between our interests and the innocent animals because we can easily blame the Gods for the crime we committed.

As the discussion goes on, they reach the topic of vegetarianism. Costello's daughter-in-law, Norma, considers vegetarianism as "only an extreme form of dietary ban" (87). But, Costello rejects it referring to how Mahatma Gandhi became vegetarian. The real motive behind mentioning the reason of Gandhi's vegetarianism is just to inform Norma that vegetarianism can be the result of other so many practices but not a dietary ban because "Gandhi's vegetarianism can hardly be conceived as the exercise of power" (88). He was vegetarian because he was influenced by his vegetarian mother and was brought-up in a typical Brahmin vegetarian society. But when the president asks the reason for her vegetarianism, Costello gives a clever answer: "It comes out of a desire to save my soul" (89). Costello, here hints at the 'ethical vegetarianism' that is vegetarianism should come from our own desire, not imposed and powered by others.

At the end of this discussion all the participants end up on a consensus that human being should not kill animals just because they believe that animals have no consciousness. Costello finally raises a question: "What is so special about the form of consciousness we recognize that makes killing a bearer of it a crime while killing an animal goes unpunished?" (90). Supporting her argument another participant opines that "[b]abies have no self-consciousness, yet we think it a more heinous crime to kill a baby than an adult" (90). This is to say that as we love the babies though they

do not know the people who love them, we should love the animals because to some extent they recognize the people who love them.

The next lecture Costello delivers is hosted by the English Department and the topic is "The Poets and the Animals." In this specific topic she selects three poems written about the animals which she analyzes. The poems are "The Panther" written by Rilke and "The Jaguar" and "Second Glance at a Jaguar" by Ted Hughes. Every participant is provided the photocopy of the poems and Costello is at the podium delivering her lecture on how the poets have depicted the animals in their poems.

But Coetzee's mouthpiece Costello in her lecture "The Poets and the Animals" is not dealing with the issue how human beings treat the animals in a direct way rather, here she is focusing on the issue how animals are being depicted and portrayed in the poems and to what extent poets (human beings in general) are being able to express the experiences of animal beings in their poetry because animals are never expected to express their experiences to human beings.

The first poem she analyzes is "The Panther" by Rilke. From the very beginning of her lecture Costello talks of how the poets distort the originality of the animals to suit for the human qualities. "Animals stand for the human qualities; the lion for courage, the owl for wisdom and so forth" (95). Costello expresses that while defining the panther Rilke could not go beyond a fixed definition. To write a poem about a panther, Rilke goes to a zoo and there observes a panther trapped in the cage where it is exposing its full strength to be out of that cage. So, Rilke cannot define the panther beyond "the vital embodiment of the kind of force that is released in an atomic explosion but is here trapped not so much by the bars of the cage as by what the bars compel on the panther" (95). So, Rilke fails to depict the emotions of panther is to say that he is also a common human being who never try to understand or feel the sentiments of animals.

For Costello, "Hughes is writing against Rilke" (95). That is to say in the next two poems titled "The Jaguar" and "Second Glance at a Jaguar" the poet Ted Hughes depicts the caged jaguar in a different way -- totally different from that of Rilke. While observing the jaguar at the zoo, the poet undergoes a different experience than the rest of the observers: "The man, the poet, entranced and horrified and overwhelmed, his powers of understanding pushed beyond their limit" (95). After reading the poems by both these poets what Costello feels is that "The jaguar's vision, unlike the panther's, is not blunted" (95). Ted Hughes depicts the jaguar in such a way that the creature does not seem to be feeling that it is trapped inside the cage. "The cage has no reality to him, he is *elsewhere*. He is elsewhere because his consciousness is kinetic rather than abstract" (95).

So, Costello largely supports Hughes for his way of portraying the jaguar in his poem. She says that Hughes is focusing on the action that jaguar shows rather than the outlook in his poems. In a way by focusing on the action and movement, Hughes is moving our imagination also.

With Hughes it is a matter [. . .] not of inhabiting another mind but of inhabiting another body. That is the kind of poetry I bring to your attention today; poetry that does not try to find an idea in the animal, that is not about the animal, but is instead the record of an engagement with him. (96)

That is how Costello defends the poetry by Hughes that she chooses. According to Costello these two poems by Hughes have nothing to do with the object jaguar or how it seems, its size, color and things like this because these poems "remain a matter of complete indifference to their objects" (96). And, for this specific feature, these poems are different from love poems.

Again, what Costello says is that she admires and appreciates the poetic skill and poems of Hughes because of the style he has taken. Hughes presents a jaguar full of energy, strength and life - a jaguar full of action in his poems. In a way, he gives life to the jaguar he depicts. We can feel the way a jaguar feels by reading the poems of Hughes:

By bodying for the jaguar, Hughes shows us that we too can embody animals – by the process called poetic invention [. . .]. He shows us how to bring the living body into being within ourselves. When we read the jaguar poem, when we recollect it afterwards in tranquility, we are for a brief while the jaguar. (98)

By talking about the poetic style of Hughes, Costello urges rest of the poets not to humanize the animalistic characters of the innocent animals. That is to say, only animality of animals should be portrayed. For this purpose Hughes remains master of her because "[t]he poems that Hughes write is about the jaguar, about jaguariness embodied in this jaguar" (98).

However, Costello's praise of Hughes does not mean that she totally agrees with what Hughes expresses. To some extent, Costello departs from Hughes. For instance, the animal Hughes depicts on his poems is not as concrete as the whole animals for which Costello delivers this lengthy lecture. Costello herself admits that Hughes's poems lack concrete idea and they are more Platonic. His poems highlight the isness of the being, instead of being itself. She writes: "So, despite the vividness and earthiness of the poetry, there remains something Platonic about it" (98).

Every living creature fights for its own individual existence throughout the life and it does not want to be anyone except itself either it be human or the animal. So, we should not try to interfere their rights -- to live their life on their own choice -- by considering ourselves superior to the animals. But the misery is that we think

ourselves the manager of ecology and we try to overpower and control the rest of the animal beings. Costello further goes on, "The only organism over which we do not claim this power of life and death is man. Why? Because man is different [. . .]. Man is an intellectual being" (99).

After this specific discussion about how the poets have depicted the animals in the poem she moves forward to her general point of discussion – the relationship between human and animals. Elaine Marx, a member at the English Department asks a question related with rationality of humans and animals. To answer him, she refers to the masterpiece by Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travel*, where the protagonist Lamuel Gulliver cannot cope with the utopian society – a society full of reason, because it's too difficult to survive in a society where everything is bound to rules and regulations. As Gulliver -- a being with reason -- cannot obey everything drafted by the totalitarian society, its rational vegetarianism, its rational government and its rational approach to love, marriage and death, then how could we ask for animals to live and follow the rules of our rational society? Again referring to the famous essay by Swift, *A Modest Proposal*, she questions: "If it is atrocious to kill and eat human babies, why it is not atrocious to kill and eat piglets?" (101). The reason for taking these two texts as reference may be how human beings try to impose the power upon other beings though it is not deserved by them. Doubting the status of human being, she says: "Embracing the status of man has entailed slaughtering and enslaving a race of divine or else divinely created beings" (103).

In a short conversation with her son John, Costello again tries to clarify him on his dissatisfaction towards her animal right viewpoints. The conversation between these two is quite interesting:

"Do you really believe, mother, that poetry classes are going to close down the slaughterhouses?"

"No."

"Then why do it? You said you were tired of clever talk about animals proving by syllogism that they do or do not have souls. But isn't poetry just another kind of clever talk?" (103)

Costello has nothing to say about it. She knows that her son is also one of them who consider animals as being without soul.

While discussing they reach another important topic of discussion – carnivorousness of humans and animals. John raises a question why meat is necessary for carnivorous animals (like jaguars) but she is giving lectures on stopping human beings from consuming meat. She answers his question on her own way: "Because he would die [. . .] human beings don't die on vegetarian diet" (103). Here, both seem right on their own point but the way Costello answers her son is worth appreciating. It is true that carnivorous animals cannot survive without meat because they are not habituated to vegetarian foods but human beings have developed so many food items that they do not need to depend upon the non-vegetarian food for any kind of nutrition and other such reasons.

Next, John raises another question with his mother about her involvement in animal-rights issue. He says that people kill them and treat them badly because they do not resist and they deserve it because they lack habit of helping each-other. Even, they do not speak of their rights:

In a sense, animals deserve what they get. Why waste your time trying to help them when they won't help themselves? [. . .]. If I were asked what the general attitude is towards the animals we eat, I would say: contempt. We treat them badly because we despise them; we despise them because they don't fight back. (104)

However, Costello responds this with a good opinion. According to Costello, "We treat them like prisoners of war" (104). She compares the animals with prisoners of war in the sense that we can do what we want with them. As a prisoner of war is subjected to the winner and follows whatever the winner says to him, so is the condition of the animals: "We can sacrifice him to the gods. We can cut his throat, tear out his heart, throw him on the fire" (104). Costello says that we have declared ourselves the winner in the war between us and the animal beings, and now we have made them slaves. We try to get benefit from everything they possess. Even she speaks to the extent that "[w]e don't hate them because they aren't worth hating anymore. We regard them, as you say, with contempt" (105).

Finally, the lecture session is over and now Costello will take part in a debate session. A professor of the college raises the question related with animal rights movement and its historical nature and origins. He links all the animal right issues with the history of human rights and speaks that it is very recent and western development. His point is that Western people are trying to impose their thesis to the rest of the world. But Costello replies him with her reasoning answer. She accepts that animal right issue is very recent one but she disagrees with him to call it just a Western trend. Costello refers to the pet-keeping nature of ancient travelers all over the world as her reason to reject his claim. Her point is that each and every human should teach their children to treat animals with kindness: "Of course children all over the world consort quite naturally with animals. They don't see any dividing line. That is something they have to be taught, just as they have to be taught it is all right to kill and eat them" (106).

Again, she turns back to Descartes to answer the query by the professor. He says that "Descartes did not invent the idea that animals belong to a different order from human kind; he merely formalized it in a new way" (105-06). But, for Costello

Descartes differentiates human and animal because of lack of complete information, or science had not proved so many things related with the apes and human beings in Descartes's time: "The science of Descartes' day had no acquaintance with the great apes and thus little cause to question the assumption that animals cannot think" (107). Even, Descartes lacked the fossil report which proved the apes as ancestors of present human beings. So, Costello rightly points out that Descartes's view was the result of incomplete information.

After Costello replies the first thesis of the professor, he moves to the second one and his second query is concerned with the thinking capacity of the animals in relation to humans. He presents his thesis that "best performance the higher apes can put up is no better than that of a speech impaired human being with several mental retardation" (107). What he tries to say through his thesis is that the thinking capacity of a human being and an animal is not worth comparing even to a little degree. To it Costello responds angrily. Addressing the professor she says that all these so-called scientific experiments are incomplete because they lack balance and they are one-sided: "The programme of scientific experimentation that leads you to conclude that animals are imbeciles is profoundly anthropocentric [. . .]. It is the experiments that are imbecile" (108). Human beings always try to measure these kinds of experiments with human standard, therefore, it is devoid of balance.

Then the professor doubts whether animals do understand death as human beings do. "I do not believe that life is as important to animals as it is to us" (108). Though he believes that animals do have instinctive struggle against death or they do not easily surrender with death, they do not have that fear of death. Costello has answer to this query also. She says that animals are not the only living beings which have no fear of death. In fact so many human beings also do not have such fear of

death: "It is only among certain very imaginative human beings that one encounters a horror of dying so acute that they then project it onto other beings" (109).

However, Costello is so much furious over those who consider that we can kill animals because their lives are not important to us and most of all they do not fight back for the death. What Costello tries to deliver in her lectures is that any kind of unnecessary cruelty towards these helpless animal beings is condemnable and "[w]e should agitate for the humane treatment of animals, particularly in slaughterhouses" (109). She appreciates the motive and job of animal-rights movement and also urges all the human beings to do so because they fight against the unwanted and needless cruelty towards animals.

The final question the professor puts to Costello is: who loves animals more? -- one who get pleasure from eating the flesh of animals after hunting them or the one who wants to protect all the animals and hopes no one preys on anyone else? But, it is so sad that Costello does not answer him. First of all she urges her opponent to understand the life and death of animals to its fullest, from a close distance, from the poem written by nature poets and so on and, requests the philosopher to observe how a veal calf reacts when he does not see his mother around him, how a small calf who is totally unaware of the concepts of presence and absence, and self and other, misses his mother:

Can we, asked this philosopher, strictly speaking, say that the veal calf misses its mother? Does the veal calf have enough of a grasp of the significance of the mother relation, does the veal calf have enough of a grasp of the meaning of the maternal absence, does the veal calf, finally know enough about missing to know that the feeling it has is the feeling of missing?" (111)

It is the point where Costello shows all her anger at the fullest. At the last moment she does not want to respond the person with whom she shares nothing – even not a point. She says that “[d]iscussion is possible only when there is common ground” (112). But she has nothing to tell her opponent because she is not sure that she shares reason with her opponent. Rather she opts for choosing another opponent. So the lectures and the discussion end in a sad note.

At the end of her visit to Appleton College when Costello is heading to the airport to return her home, she invokes the Holocaust analogy again. Speaking to her son about how radically disoriented she feels in this world, she imagines going into the living room of her friends which is decorated with the lamp made up of “the skins of young polish-jewish virgins” and even she imagines going into the bathroom of friends and confronting a shop-wrapper that says “Treblinka – 100% human stearate” (115). Costello imagines feeling this way about her fellow human beings who brutally kill the animals and eat them, but she also hopes to see human kindness in the very same people’s eyes.

The researcher has analyzed the whole lectures and debates of the protagonist Elizabeth Costello so far. Costello, the fictionalized character of J. M. Coetzee presents a lengthy fictionalized lecture on the very real topic of human cruelty and animal suffering on her own style. However, whether to believe and follow her animal-rights ideology is personal matter, but what she speaks is true human words and every human should turn their ear to her plea because her plea is a common and ordinary one – just to treat the animal beings humanely.

But, there is doubt over authenticity and credibility on the lectures delivered by Elizabeth Costello. Is it the writer J. M. Coetzee who is speaking through Costello? If it is Coetzee’s own standpoints then why he chooses the next character to speak his personal idea? These are some questions to be raised by the careful readers. But, there

is no doubt that Costello is the mouthpiece of Coetzee because the ideas presented here by Coetzee through Costello about human beings' ethical treatment towards animals are already expressed by the writer in his other texts too. In this special text written mainly on the issue of animal-rights or human-animal relationship, he has largely spoken in this issue. However, what Coetzee tries to express these two texts is that it is not easy to convince people on this sort of issues where almost 80-90% people daily consume meat and other meat products along with other products by killing the animals. The way Costello faces challenge from her own son and above all her daughter-in-law, and other philosophers is just a hint of that tussle.

The Lives of Animals, the main text of this research contains commentaries by four prominent commentators at its concluding part. These four commentators – the literary theorist Marjorie Garber, the philosopher Peter Singer, the religious scholar Wendy Doniger, and the primatologist Barbara Smuts – discuss the form and content of Coetzee's lectures. These commentators do not share a single academic discipline, nor are they even members of neighboring disciplines, but their commentaries together help constitute a more complete understanding of how human beings can and should relate, and treat animals. Though these commentators are from different disciplinary fields, all of them agree with J. M. Coetzee on one common ethical ground that human beings should extend their love, sympathy and kindness towards animals. Coetzee's story ends with the ambiguously consoling words that Costello's son whispers to his mother. "There, there, it will soon be over" (115). However, by contrast, these moral matters will not soon be over.

The present researcher analyzes the extract of the two texts – *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello*-- by J. M. Coetzee because both of these texts include the same extracts and the real intention of the author behind both the texts is same, i.e. to highlight the animal-right issue. Though *The lives of Animals* (1999) presents the

animal issue related with human being in a special way with editorial by a famous editor and four commentaries by four prominent commentators, the writer Coetzee included the same lessons in his next text *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) also because this text was totally written from the perspective of the protagonist of *The Lives of Animals* – Elizabeth Costello who is the mouthpiece of Coetzee. So, in both of these texts Coetzee speaks through his favorite and fire-breathing character, to teach the whole human generation about the ethical relationship between the human and animal beings.

Coetzee's Standpoints on Relationship Between Human Beings and the Animals in *Disgrace*

J. M. Coetzee's novel *Disgrace*, on its ground level characterizes those people who are badly affected by the legacy of a dark and bleak system in South Africa named apartheid. Apartheid, a system that halted the development of South Africa for almost forty-two years through the medium of racial discrimination, gave painful scars to the public of South Africa. But, this novel's main concern is not to portray that bleak era of Africa as it was, rather the novel revolves round the events of post-apartheid South Africa. In short, it depicts the aftermath or the consequence of the apartheid and in the novel "hangover from the past is being enacted in one way or another even in post-apartheid era" (*Disgrace* 40).

But, the present researcher in this research deals with quite different issue of the novel, i.e. ethical concern shown by the characters of the novel towards animals and the relationship between human beings and animals. The novelist, J. M. Coetzee presents this issue in a few pages of the novel but significantly. Each and every characters of the novel is one way or the other touched by this issue and they have relationship with animals. Even the protagonist of the novel David Lurie (52) who

considers himself as a person who likes animals because he eats them (*Disgrace* 81) also develops an ethical relationship with animals as the novel progresses but he himself is unnoticed of that fact. In apparent contradiction to his professed lack of interest in animals, David is in fact rather fond of describing himself and more pointedly his relationship with women in terms drawn from the animal kingdom. "Were he to choose a totem, it would be a snake." And the reason? "Intercourse between Soraya and himself must be, he imagines, rather like the copulation of snakes; lengthy, absorbed rather abstract, rather dry, even at its hottest" (2-3). More commonly he employs the language of predation. For example, when he foolhardily attempts to visit Soraya at her home, he invokes an image from animal nature: "what should a predator expect when intrudes into the vixen's nest, into the home of her cub?" (10).

Later, when he forces himself on the almost entirely submissive Melanie Issacs (20), the episode is described in equally predatory terms:

Little shivers of cold run through her as soon as she is bare, she slips under the quilted counterpane like a mole burrowing, and turns her back on him. Not rape, not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, undesired to the core. As though she had decided to go slack, die within herself for the duration, like a rabbit when the jaws of the fox close on its neck. (3)

There are other so many occasions in the novel when the protagonist of the novel knowingly or unknowingly relates himself with the animals. Whatever may be the reason behind his inclination towards animals, it is proved that it can be taken as the forecasting of his future, i.e. his friendly and humanly relationship with animals. After the sex scandal in the university, he resigns from the post of professor and moves to his daughter Lucy's residence in a country. This is the place where he first of all

confronts with huge amount of animals and the novel too takes a turn to country setting from urban setting. Up to this point the world of the novel has been resolutely urban with academic satires, lectures and seductions, tribunals and procedures, scandals and dismissals. However, when the novel setting changes into the countryside, everything changes and David finds himself in the midst of real and not simply metaphorical animals.

After Lurie's alleged sex relationship with Melanie Issacs, he loses his reputation as a romantic professor at university. Even he loses his post and dignity. He reaches his daughter's residence as a disgraced person. But, no sooner David reaches Lucy's smallholding, he is introduced to the dogs, which are there in the boarding kennel of Lucy. "There are the dogs. Dogs still mean something. The more dogs the more deterrence" (60). Along with dogs he is introduced to Petrus; Lucy's new assistant for kennel. In his conversation with Petrus, Petrus introduces himself as the dog-man: "I am the gardener and the dog-man." He reflects for a moment. "The dog-man" he repeats savoring the phrase (64). This is David Lurie's first encounter to a person like Petrus who proudly associates himself with the dogs and does not hesitate to say it and his repetition of the phrase "the dog-man" is example of it. Lucy further introduces her father with Bev Shaw, a woman who runs "The Animal Welfare League", an animal refuge and whole heartedly committed to the cause of animal welfare (72). When he reaches 'The Animal Welfare League', he further meets Bill Shaw, Bev Shaw's husband, serving the sick and dying animals. In this way one after another he is introduced to those persons who are close to animals or who have close relationship with animals and gradually he approaches the animals.

Though at the first part of the novel there is so little to suggest that animals will play any part in David's rehabilitation or accommodation to changed conditions and circumstances and there is certainly no suggestion that an engagement with

animals will not only parallel his deepening state of disgrace but actually constitute it; it happens as the novel reaches the ending. He does not seem to have an inborn sense of empathy for animals and other oppressed creatures but as the novel progresses that sensitivity awakens in part because of his own loss of status.

On his return to Lucy's home from Shaw's animal crowded house and garden, David Lurie is a little bit moved. He terms Bev's attempt to rescue the animals "a losing battle" (73). To this Lucy responds heavily: "on the list of the nation's priorities animals come nowhere" and this is the point which the novelist amplifies throughout the novel (73). The issue of human-animal relationship enters the novel through this hot discussion between the father and daughter. David responds to his daughter that he has nothing to do with the animals and he seems indifferent to the plight of animals at the beginning. He even bitterly comments on the service of the Shaws (and even his daughter) at animal refuge:

I am very sorry my child, I just find it hard to whip up an interest in the subject. Its admirable, what you do, what she does, but to me animal-welfare people are a bit like Christians of certain kind. Everyone is so cheerful and well intentioned that after a while you itch to go off and do some raping and pillaging or to kick a cat. (73)

To this quite disturbing sort of comment by David, Lucy, the profound animal lover in the novel, reacts angrily. She thinks that her father's disdain for the life of animal-welfare people and especially of the Shaws, is not limited to them only but also for her association with such people.

Here, Lucy not only defends the service of the Shaws but also defends and hails the lives of the animals too. So, Lucy responds bitterly to her father's comment:

You don't approve of friends like Bev and Bill Shaw because they are not going to lead me a higher life, and the reason is there's no higher

life. This is the only life there is, which we share with the animals.

That's the example that people like Bev try to set. That's the example I try to follow. To share some of our privileges with the beasts. I don't want to come back in another existence as a dog or a pig and have to live as dogs or pigs do under us. (73)

And, to a certain degree her response works. After her hot reaction to his comments David corrects himself. "Let us be kind to them" he says, "we are of a different order of creation from the animals. Not higher, necessarily, just different" (73). This is the scenario of the novel where Coetzee's articulation of disgrace is most profoundly registered. Whatever may be David's comment on human-animal relationship, animals are the transformative element in the novel.

After this event we notice a drastic turn in David. He accepts the proposal of his daughter to help Bev Shaw in her animal clinic. This is the first instance in the novel where he attempts to correct himself. When his daughter says that he has to do the job without expecting the payments, he says, "I am dubious Lucy. It sounds suspiciously like community service. It sounds like someone trying to make reparation for past misdeeds" (77). Here, he hints at himself being the person who committed the past misdeeds and is trying to correct it by volunteering at the animal clinic and short after we can notice his real compassion towards dogs when we see him at the kennel.

He gets up, goes out into the yard. The younger dogs are delighted to see him. They trot back and forth in their cages, whining eagerly. But the old bulldog bitch barely stirs. He enters her cage, closes the door behind him. She raises her head, regards him, lets her head fall again; her old dugs hang slack. He squats down. Tickles her behind the ears. 'Abandoned are we?', he murmurs. (78)

This is the first time in the novel that David relates himself with the animal (dog). He finds both of them -- Katy and himself -- abandoned and at the same time sheltering on same house. This is his first real interaction with the animal where he falls asleep with the bitch. When Lucy finds him in this condition, she responds quickly. "Making friends?" says Lucy (78). This animal-loving lady shows her sympathy towards the animals. "They are part of the furniture, part of the alarm system. They do us the honor of treating us like gods, and we respond by treating them like things" (78). Here, she seems to be unhappy with the manner human beings show towards animals and she employs the language of humanitarian concern.

Later the two discuss on the issue of whether animals have souls. David reminds Lucy of century-long debate on the subject by the church fathers: "The church Fathers had a long debate about them, and decided they don't have proper souls [. . .] Their souls are tied to their bodies and die with them" (78). But Lucy says she does not believe on soul's period: "I'm not sure that I have a soul. I wouldn't know a soul if I saw one" (79). However, he replies emphatically in one of his few declarative statements "You are a soul. We are all souls. We are souls before we are born" (79). Here, David adheres to a Platonic ontology but by the end of the novel he has decided that animals do have souls. "The business of dog-killing is over for the day, the black dogs are piled at the door, each with a body and a soul inside" (161).

After this discussion and in reference to an abandoned bulldog Katy whom Lucy has decided to adopt, David shows the signs of his changing sensitivity to the animals, "a shadow of grief falls over him for Katy, alone in her cage, for himself, for everyone" (79). At Lucy's suggestion he decides to volunteer at the animal refuge run by Bev – whose name he refuses to utter as it reminds him "of cattle" (79). On his first day in the animal clinic he remains skeptical of Bev's attribution of sensitivity and intelligence to animals. While holding the animals she tells him that he should "think

comforting thoughts, think strong thoughts. They can smell what you are thinking" (81). But, shortly thereafter he has to check himself from feeling that a dog has "an intelligent look, though it is probably nothing of the kind" (85). In this way, on his first day as a volunteer in Bev Shaw's animal clinic, he develops some positive feelings towards animals when he observes the sick, diseased and death awaiting animals there.

But the event that largely changes David's perspectives is his own experience of being victimized by a gang of assailants who set him on fire, rape his daughter Lucy and even kill all the kennel dogs except Katy. As Bev treats his injuries he compares himself to a miserable goat he had helped earlier in the animal clinic. "He recalls the goat in the clinic, wonders whether, submitting to her hands, it felt the same peacefulness" (106). It is the recognition of his own suffering badly seen as a shared condition with the goat that leads to David's change of heart.

The next sign of David's changed heart after the wake of his own suffering is seen when David shows concern for the condition of two young sheep brought by Petrus, who are tethered in Lucy's yard in preparation for their slaughter:

"Those sheep" he says – "don't you think we could tie them where they can graze?"

"They are for the party" says Petrus. "On Saturday I'll slaughter them for the party." You and Lucy must come [. . .].

"Thank you. But even if the sheep are for the party, don't you think they could graze?" (123)

But, even after David's concern over those sheep, Petrus does not let them graze. Finally, he let them free and allows them to eat and drink more comfortably reflecting how they were "destined since birth for the butcher's knife" (123).

David has the most reflective thoughts of the novel throughout this whole scene:

When did a sheep last die of a old age? Sheep do not own themselves, do not own their lives. They exist to be used, every last ounce of them, their flesh to be eaten, their bones to be crushed and fed to poultry. Nothing escapes; except perhaps the gall bladder, which no one will eat. (123-24)

And, this time David seems so much serious after he approaches those sheep. He has even "thought of buying the sheep from Petrus" and let them free but he knows the fact that it will be worthless to do this (126).

David begins to draw parallel between his life and the lives of those two sheep because he finds many similarities between himself and those 'scape-sheep':

A bond seems to have come into existence between himself and the two Persians, he does not know how [. . .] He remembers Bev Shaw nuzzling the old billy-goat [. . .] comforting him, entering into his life. How does she get it right this communion with animals? [. . .] One has to be a certain kind of person, perhaps [. . .] Do I have to change? [. . .] Do I have to become like Bev Shaw? (126)

Contemplating the fate of these two half-starved and pre-destined to be killed animals, David admits to being "disturbed [he] can't say why" (127).

And, on Saturday – the slaughtering day of the two sheep, he feels too much sad. After a while, he reaches Petrus' party venue. When he reaches the dinner table he feels so much uneasy: "The plate he is holding contains two mutton chops [. . .]. I am going to eat this, he says to himself. I am going to eat it and as forgiveness afterwards" (131). The same person who once proudly said that he likes animals

because he eats "some parts of them" is now thinking of forgiveness (81). This is one of the biggest changes David undergoes throughout the novel.

David continues his job at animal refuge. Through his work -- assisting Bev Shaw at the clinic -- he forms an initially confused but increasingly profound awareness of animals' experience of suffering. Almost all animals brought to the clinic are destined to be killed: "The dogs that are brought in suffer from distempers, from broken limbs, from infected bites [. . .] when people bring a dog they do not say straight out 'I have brought you this dog to kill', but that is expected" (142). Through his job at the clinic, David comes to realize that most people bring their animals to the shelter as a convenient way of getting rid of them. In this way, he is so close to the sufferings these animals undergo in the final hour of their life. So, for the first time in the novel, he realizes that he is a disgraced and shameful person and compares his disgraced life with the disgraced death of the dogs. "The dogs fail to be charmed, it is because of his presence; he gives off the wrong smell, the smell of shame" and he knows that dogs can smell his thoughts (142). Here, David's shame is for the real disgrace the novel's title refers to, namely, the atrocious suffering inflicted upon animals by humans.

However, David also believes that those dogs that are awaiting death in the animal clinic are aware of their disgraced death. "He is convinced the dogs know their time has come [. . .] the dogs in the yard smell what is going on inside. They flatten their ears, they droop their tails, as if they too feel the disgrace of dying" (143). In a way, here David is trying to justify that animals too can think and they also feel the pain of their death. He further adds, "None will look at the needle in Bev's hand, which they somehow know is going to harm them terribly" (143) which denotes that David thinks that these dying and sick dogs can really smell their possible danger. He attempts to rationalize the so-called irrational creatures.

While working with Bev in her clinic for some time performing the job of killing and disposing of dying animals, all of a sudden there is great change in David's heart. In one of the most compelling sections of the novel David reflects on one of the Sunday evening when his heart feels something unusual.

The more killing he assists in, the more jittery he gets. One Sunday evening, driving home in Lucy's Kombi, he actually has to stop at the roadside to recover himself. Tears flow down his face that he cannot stop; his hands shake. He does not understand what is happening to him. Until now he has been more or less indifferent to animals.

Although in an abstract way he disapproves of cruelty, he cannot tell whether by nature he is cruel or kind. He is simply nothing. (143)

So, now, David is so much inclined to the animals which he himself is unaware of and animals cease to be fit object for David's theoretical and philosophical speculation. As his professional, sexual and gender identities crumble, and as his relationship with Lucy undergoes severe strain in the aftermath of the attack (and rape) on herself and her animals emerge in their own right with him.

Gradually, he is so much occupied with compassion, sympathy and love towards animals that he suspects the job of Bev Shaw. "He does not dismiss the possibility that at the deepest level Bev Shaw may be not a liberating angel but a devil, that beneath her show of compassion may hide a heart as leathery as a butcher's" (144).

To our surprise, David now so much contemplates on animals that he is thinking of granting honour to the dead animals too. He does not want to mix up the bags filled with dead bodies of animals "with the rest of weekend's scourging, with waste from hospital wards [...] he is not prepared to inflict such dishonor upon them" (144). When the incinerator workmen arrive there to take away the dead bodies for

disposal and “after a while the workmen began to beat the bags with the backs of their shovel before loading them, to break the rigid limbs [...] he intervened and took over the job himself” (144-45). Then he “himself loads them, one at a time” (144). He analyzes his life; he analyzes himself and the job he is undertaking.

Why he has undertaken this job? To lighten the burden on Bev Shaw?
 [...] For the sake of dogs? But the dogs are dead; and what do dogs
 know of honor and dishonor anyway? For himself, then. For the idea of
 the world, a world in which men do not use shovels to beat corpses
 into a more convenient shape for processing. (144-45)

And, finally he reaches the conclusion. The last sentence comes as close as any in the novel to an articulation of the value that most deeply informs it. This is not a practical commitment to improve the world but a profound need to preserve the integrity of the self.

After a long debate within himself, David concludes that he is on the process of becoming the dog-man:

The dogs are brought to the clinic because they are unwanted [...] That
 is where he enters their lives. He may not be their savior [...] but he is
 prepared to take care of them [...] A dog-man, Petrus once called
 himself. Well, now he has become a dog-man; a dog undertaker; a dog
 psycho pomp; a harijan. (146)

This is how he becomes the dog-man. In fact he had never thought that he would be here in this remote, dark Africa in service of sick, dying and even dead animals.

“Curious that a man as selfish as he should be offering himself to the service of dead dogs” (146). But he does it and it is the great turning point of his life – a honorable professor in South Africa’s one of the reputed universities, is now serving the dead dogs. He knows that though he is disgraced, “he saves the honor of corpses because

there is no one else stupid enough to do it" (146). He likes to be stupid and "that is what he is becoming; stupid, daft, wrongheaded" (146).

Another transformation of David's heart we notice is regarding whether animals do have souls or not. Once David used to believe that animals "don't have proper souls" as claimed by Christian Fathers (79). But now he talks of transformation of animals' soul after their death. "There is only the young dog left, the one who likes music [...], mixed smell still linger, including one he will not yet have met with in his life; the smell of expiration; the soft short smell of the released soul" (219). He is fully assured that animals do have souls and after their death their souls too abandon the body.

David is so much attached with the animals that now they are inseparable with him. When he returns to Cape Town after spending some time in the countryside, he thinks of forgetting everything that happened there, even the dogs. "As for the dogs, he does not want to think about them" (178). But, he never can do so. He returns and this time more affectionate than before. He is ready to dedicate his whole life and everything belonging to him for the service of those lifeless animals. "The clinic, more than the boarding-house, becomes his home" (211). He keeps himself busy feeding them and providing them medicines: "Twice a day he feeds the animals; he cleans out their pens and occasionally talks to them" and it has become the part of his daily routine (211). Even he spends his hard earned money to buy all the necessary accessories including on half-ton pick up for their service. And, now they are the members of his family.

The next amazing thing David tries to do is he is thinking of including the dog in the chamber opera he himself composes as his dream project. David is working for an opera about Lord Byron and his lover Teresa, and in that opera he thinks of involving a dog. He thinks of performing the opera in front of the animals as his only

audience. The dog is a young male for whom he has grown "a particular fondness" (215). The dog is special one for him because "its period of grace is almost over" (215). Furthermore, "the dog is fascinated by the sound of the banjo" (215). So, he is planning to honour the disgraced animal by characterizing the dog in his dream project.

And, the novel ends on one of the killing Sundays. David and Bev are busy killing animals by 'Losung'. One by one all animals are killed and it is the turn of the last one – the young dog. The novelist, Coetzee, portrays David as redeemed during the killing of the animals and David feels adopted by his favorite dog. When he must kill the dog, language comes back to him in a redemptive way because David recognizes that it is morally corrupt to deny one's heart to a fellow being: "He had learned by now [. . .] to concentrate all his attention on the animal they are killing, giving it what he no longer has difficulty in calling by its proper name 'Love'" (219). He faces so much difficulty to kill that dog with whom he has developed an ethical relationship. He thinks of saving the dog for a week: "He can save the young dog if he wishes, for another week. But a time must come, it cannot be evaded" but it [is] worthless because the next week it has to die (219). He holds the dog "like a lamb" in his final moments (220). The phrase 'like a lamb' has Christian overtones. Bev is surprised that David makes no attempt to save his beloved dog for another week. "I thought you would save him for another week" says Bev Shaw, "Are you giving him up?" (220). It appears that David's resigned attitude reflects the author's despair over human beings' lack of charity and sympathy, as seen in their callous treatment of animals, and pessimism about the likelihood that things will soon change.

This is the end of the novel. In fact, every character of the novel -- not only David Lurie -- is attached to the animals. Though we can trace out most of the significant changes in the character of David Lurie through his affiliation with

animals, other characters too have such ethical relationship with animals. From the very beginning of the novel, both Lucy and Bev Shaw are hard-core animal lovers and they do not hesitate to relate their life with that of animals. In one of the most profound dialogues of the novel, Lucy compares her life surrounded by humiliation in the dark times with that of the lives of dogs: "Yes, I agree, it is humiliating [. . .] to start at ground level, with nothing. Not with nothing but, with nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity" (205). She is ready to live like a dog as she answers her father's query. David asks: "Like a dog?" and Lucy responds: "Yes, like a dog" (205).

This phrase "like a dog" resonates throughout *Disgrace* and it captures all characters, not only Lucy. In fact, the dogs or the animals are responsible for the ethical turn of the novel, i.e. David's transformation. Otherwise, it would be hard to notice such transformations on a person like David – a man so "corroded with skepticism" through other mediums, except the animals (102). This is how the novel *Disgrace* ends with a sweet note that we should learn to grow sympathy and kindness towards animals because they have the power to change a person as hard as David Lurie.

And, finally what can be said is that Coetzee has a different sort of motive to highlight the animal issues in *Disgrace*. Here, he seems to be saying that one should not sympathize animals because they are the inferior beings or because they lack the essential soul. Rather they should love and sympathize animals for helping his/her own self and Coetzee proves it by creating a helpless character like David Lurie, who desperately seeks and is finally helped by animals. So, one should express love for animals from the inner part of his/her heart.

III. Conclusion

Now, it is almost clear that the purpose of the research is to bring out and analyze human-animal relationship and propose a new way for how human beings should treat the animals on the basis of three texts written by J.M. Coetzee -- *Disgrace*, *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello*. Coetzee, in these three texts, raises different issues on human-animal relationship but he tries to deliver just one message to the whole human civilization: treat your fellow animals with ethical touch and respect them for their sensation of being. In other words, love for animals should come out of human heart; one should feel the sufferings of animals. Coetzee's portrayal of David as a disgraced professor to an avid-lover of animals in *Disgrace* and Elizabeth Costello as a fire-breathing orator on the issues of human-animal relationship, tries to show that present human beings should learn something from these two characters.

Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello* present the animal issues at the forefront. The tanner lectures included in these two texts as fictional lectures, begins and concludes with the animal issues. Here, the author Coetzee exposes the inhumanity of human beings towards animals through a fire-breathing character Elizabeth Costello. In many occasions throughout her lectures, she compares the animal slaughter to holocaust by Nazis. She raises questions and redefines so many issues related with the human beings' treatment towards animals but above all she tries to answer the century-long question of whether animals do have rational faculty or not, and whether they possess soul or not, by departing herself from great philosophers like St. Thomas Aquinas, Rene Descartes and so on.

The central character of *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello*, Elizabeth Costello, speaks for the rights of animals. She truly represents the views of Coetzee. Coetzee is of the opinion that there should be harmonious relationship

between human beings and animals, and he sharply criticizes the way human beings treat animals. In a speech given at the Sherman Galleries in Australia (Feb22, 2003) Coetzee said that human beings should not treat animals badly because they lack faculty of reason but rather they should treat animals with love and compassion because they can feel the pain and pleasure like us and they also do have sensation of being. Elizabeth Costello in her lectures too speaks the same. So, what Costello speaks there in *The Lives of Animals* and *Elizabeth Costello* is ethical response of the author, J. M. Coetzee, to human beings' mistreatment of animals.

Though by the time Coetzee wrote *Disgrace*, he might not have thought of making animal issues the prior one and many readers and critics too think so and highlight only the racial, economic and colonial issues of this novel, this research focuses and analyzes the seemingly trivial issue ignored by critics because knowingly or unknowingly Coetzee prioritizes this issue through his characters. Almost all the characters in *Disgrace* have personal attachment with the animals and what Coetzee urges through these long lists of characters is to develop a pure and ethical relationship with our fellow animal beings because his characters too are in such kind of relationship. Even the protagonist of the novel who dislikes the human-animal relationship and never utters a word on this issue at the beginning finally finds himself in the service of the animals at the last.

Lucy is the one, who has personal attachment towards animals from the beginning of the novel. She never keeps herself off with the animals and she is the one who urges her father, David to develop relationship with the animals. Bev and Bill Shaw own the animal refuge center and whole-heartedly support the dying animals without any interest. They are the characters through which Coetzee exposes the ethical relationship between humans and animals in a true sense and David learns a lot from them. Petrus introduces himself as the dog-man and finally the protagonist

of the novel David is the character who learns a great lesson of his life through his relationship with animals. In this way, one after another animal theme frequently appears in the novel.

But, it is not only the relationship between animals and human beings that is highlighted in *Disgrace*. The most significant part of the novel is the aftermath of relationship between the animals and the protagonist David Lurie. At first, David was a person who did not like any talks related to the animal except eating their meat, and he even hated those who liked animals but slowly as he develops the relationship with animals we notice crucial changes in his behaviors. Every time he attends himself in the service of sick, dying and finally dead animals and the significant point is a person as hard and selfish as David finally appears as a volunteer serving dying, sick animals and feeling their suffering. This is where Coetzee sums up his animal theme. Here, he shows how animals can influence and finally change a disgraced person like David when he develops an ethical relationship with animals.

However, it does not mean that Coetzee's characters in his other texts about animal issue are meek in comparison to Elizabeth Costello. *Disgrace* is the most influential text among his novels depicting animal issues where Coetzee tries to deliver message through David Lurie that is completely different from that of Elizabeth Costello. In this novel what Coetzee tries to say is how a heartless and selfish character like David Lurie transforms himself when he feels pain, suffering and death of fellow animal beings. So, if every human being stands where David stands, and sees them through his lenses, their views towards animals will definitely be changed and they will know that animal is not the one to be mistreated. In his other texts like *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), *Boyhood* (1997), *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983) too J. M. Coetzee has continuously raised the human-animal relationship issues.

So, what can be concluded from these above paragraphs is that J. M. Coetzee is not only a political writer who deals with racial or apartheid South Africa or other human related issues but also is the first mainstream contemporary modern writer to take issue of human exploitation and abuse of animals seriously. Though Coetzee is aware that he is one of the minors to speak from the side of voiceless animals, time and again he raises the animal issues in his texts because he knows that it is bad to treat animals inhumanely and every human being will realize this truth sooner or later.

Finally, the research ends with a note that the issue Coetzee raises in his texts is really a significant and relevant one. The research is largely driven and guided by the ideas related to the ethical relationship between human beings and animals. As Coetzee has raised the animal right issue in *The Lives of Animals* and applies it in his novel *Disgrace*, this research too deals with these texts on his guidelines. From the very beginning till the end, the research time and again speaks for the rights of animals and hails the ideas of Coetzee. So, this research is also a document on animal rights issue for it raises and attempts to urge the rest of the human beings to think for the rights of animals. Moreover, Coetzee's protagonists expose humanity towards the fellow animals that the present human beings lack and they are ethically aware of creatural sufferings. Even, they urge human beings who are incapable and unwilling to change themselves to revise their attitude towards animals, and his most recent mouthpiece Elizabeth Costello equates human mistreatment of animals with the Holocaust that suggests the extremity of Coetzee's harsh criticism against human abuse of animals.

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