

**Charles University in Prague**  
**Faculty of Education**  
**Department of English Language and Literature**

**DIPLOMA THESIS**

**The Role of Animals in the Selected Works of J. M. Coetzee**

**Role zvířat ve vybraných dílech J. M. Coetzee**

**Bc. Anna Pragrová**

**Supervisor: PhDr. Tereza Topolovská, Ph.D**

**Study programme: Teacher Training for Secondary Schools**

**Branch of study: N AJ-HV**

**2017**

Declaration

I declare that I have worked on this thesis, The Role of Animals in the Selected Works of J. M. Coetzee, individually using only the sources listed on the Works Cited page. I declare that I have not used this diploma thesis to gain any other degree.

Prague,

.....

Signature

## Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my supervisor, PhDr. Tereza Topolovská, Ph.D., for her kind help and valuable advice throughout the writing of this thesis.

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of the thesis is to examine the way in which J. M. Coetzee employs animal imagery in his three fictional works – the novel *Disgrace*, the novella *The Lives of Animals* and the short story “*The Old Woman and the Cats*”. A historical overview of the development of the human-animal relationship is provided as the theoretical basis for the practical part, along with an explanation of the term *speciesism*. The overview will help to comprehend why and how has the relationship of humans to animals changed throughout time and what is the reason of its contemporary shape. It will also serve as a theoretical basis for the interpretation of the portrayal of animals in the selected works. A description of the author’s life and the analysed works will be given along with a brief presentation of the situation in post-apartheid South Africa and its historical events which will serve as a basis for a later analysis of the portrayal of animals in connection with political issues. The analytical part will therefore be based on the interpretation of the role of animals in the selected works and will examine its connection with both ethical and political issues, and its function as a language and educational tool.

## **KEY WORDS**

literature, South-African literature, Coetzee, speciesism, human-animal relationship, human and non-human animals, animal husbandry industry, post-apartheid era

## **ABSTRAKT**

Cílem diplomové práce je prozkoumat přístup, jakým J. M. Coetzee uplatňuje zobrazování zvířat ve třech fiktivních dílech – v novelách *Disgrace* a *The Lives of Animals* a v povídce “The Old Woman and the Cats”. V práci je popsán historický přehled vývoje lidsko-zvířecích vztahů, jakožto teoretický základ pro další rozbor, spolu s vysvětlením pojmu *speciesism*. Historický přehled vývoje lidsko-zvířecího vztahu napomůže pochopit, proč a jakým způsobem se tento vztah měnil v průběhu historie a jaký je důvod jeho současné podoby. Přehled bude také fungovat jako základ pro rozbor vyobrazení zvířat ve vybraných dílech J. M. Coetzee. Práce popisuje také autorův život a představuje vybraná díla. Krátce je také představena situace v Jihoafrické republice v post-apartheidní době a co k ní vedlo, což bude později využito jakožto základ pro interpretační analýzu vyobrazování zvířat související s politickou situací v Jihoafrické republice. Analytická část se věnuje interpretaci role zvířat ve vybraných dílech a prozkoumá její spojitost s etickými a politickými otázkami a funkci této role jakožto jazykový a naučný prostředek.

## **KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA**

literatura, literatura jihoafrické republiky, Coetzee, speciesismus, lidsko-zvířecí vztahy, lidská a mimo lidská zvířata, hospodářská zvířata v průmyslové produkci, období post-apartheidu

## Table of Contents

<u>Introduction.....</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>THEORETICAL PART.....</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>1 The Human-Animal Relationship.....</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>1.1 Speciesism.....</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>1.2 The Development of the Human-Animal Relationship.....</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>1.2.1 Ancient Greece.....</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>1.2.2 Anthropocentrism – Christianity.....</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>1.2.3 The Renaissance.....</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>1.2.4 The Enlightenment.....</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>1.2.5 The 19<sup>th</sup> Century.....</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>1.2.5.1 Animal Fights.....</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>1.2.5.2 Angling and Hunting.....</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>1.2.6 The 20th Century.....</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>1.2.6.1 1900s – 1970s.....</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>1.2.6.2 From the 1970s Onwards.....</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>2 J. M. Coetzee.....</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>2.1 Life and Work.....</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>2.2 South African Literary Themes and J. M. Coetzee.....</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>2.3 Characteristics of the Selected Works.....</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>2.3.1 <i>Disgrace</i>.....</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>2.3.2 <i>The Lives of Animals</i>.....</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>2.3.3 “The Old Woman and the Cats”.....</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>PRACTICAL PART.....</u>	<u>41</u>

<u>3 The Role of Animals in the Selected Works.....</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>3.1 Animals as an Ethical Instrument.....</u>	<u>42</u>
<u>3.1.1 The Notion of the Sympathetic Imagination.....</u>	<u>42</u>
<u>3.1.2 Animal Suffering and the Principle of Equal Consideration of Interests.....</u>	<u>51</u>
<u>3.2 Animals as the Basis for Figures of Speech.....</u>	<u>57</u>
<u>3.3 The Educational Dimension of the Representation of Animals.....</u>	<u>63</u>
<u>3.4 Animals as a Political Instrument.....</u>	<u>65</u>
<u>4 Conclusion.....</u>	<u>69</u>
<u>5 Works Cited.....</u>	<u>73</u>

## Introduction

The core of this thesis forms an analyses of the selected woks of fiction written by John Maxwell Coetzee, a contemporary author who was born and lived in South Africa for most of his life and who recently relocated to Australia. Besides his fictional work, he is the author of numerous essays, translations and a fictionalised autobiographical trilogy. The motifs of ageing, death, politics, moral issues, sexuality, South Africa, suffering, and animals are typical for his fiction.

Animals play an especially prominent role in J. M. Coetzee's novel *Disgrace* (1999), the novella *The Lives of Animals* (1999) and the short story "The Old Woman and the Cats" (2013), all of which will serve as a basis for the analyses in the practical part. The practical part will analyse the role and portrayal of animals in the three selected works from different points of view. While in *Disgrace*, animals are employed rather symbolically and actual animals are later an inseparable and significant aspect of the plot, in *The Lives of Animals*, animals are presented in a context that opens moral questions. The short story "The Old Woman and the Cats" also features animals – in connection with the motifs of uprootedness and death.

In the selected works, animals are integrally embedded in the lives of the main protagonists. The same could be said about our own lives, although people often tend to forget this fact and enjoy light-heartedly all animal products without sparing a thought as to what lies beyond the piece of meat on their plates, or what a life of a no longer wanted pet that was formerly loved and cared for could look like. The human-animal relationship is becoming immensely popular in philosophical, academic and political circles, and animal rights and welfare are topics which have only recently arisen among the public.

In order to analyse the role of animals in the selected works of J. M. Coetzee it is important to be familiar with the only slowly changing relationship between humans and animals. The aim of the theoretical part that presents a historical overview of the development of the human-animal relationship is to explain the reasons for the contemporary shape of the relationship of humans to animals. It will be examined what

different kinds of animals meant for humans in different stages of history, and the most significant ideas that helped to form the human-animal relationship as we know it today will be presented. Some of the philosophical concepts that lead to the contemporary shape of the human-animal relationship will be later challenged in the practical part for their groundlessness. The historical overview will help to realize the unevenness of the human-animal relationship which will also be further analysed in the practical part from the point of view of power abuse and dominance. The criticism of the notions of dominance and superiority over animals will be examined in the first part of the theoretical part where the term *speciesism* will be explained and compared to the ideologies of sexism and racism. These three concepts of power abuse will later be presented in the practical section of the thesis as a part of the analysis of Coetzee's selected works. The theoretical part will also comprise of an outline of the author's life and career as a writer along with a brief synopsis of each of the analysed writings. Furthermore, a short summary of the events that unfolded around the end of the apartheid era in South Africa and a commentary on the linkage of this topic with Coetzee's work is added. This summary will function as a historical basis for the analysis of the portrayal of animals in the post-apartheid South Africa later in the practical part.

In the practical part, Coetzee's employment of animals as a potential instrument to provoke moral reflection in his readers will be discussed. Apart from the application of symbolical and metaphorical animal language, Coetzee utilises concrete animal images and situations, the aim of which will also be examined. A brief analysis of animal imagery functioning for educational purposes will be given. Further, the purpose of the depiction of political topics/issues in the author's fiction will be analysed with reference to animal representation. Throughout the practical part a question whether Coetzee embeds own ethical and political stance into his fiction will be examined and discussed later in the conclusion of the thesis.

## THEORETICAL PART

### 1 The Human-Animal Relationship

Our relationship with animals has gradually been changing depending on time, place and ideological and cultural perspectives. The most significant changes, however, took place during the second half of the 20th century. Humans have always had the urge to classify and name their surroundings – both fauna and flora. Aristotle was the first to develop a classification of organisms and divided animals into categories such as *Anhaima* (animals without blood) and *Enhaima* (animals with blood). Later, with the development of optical lenses and scientific methods, organisms were classified according to their morphology. Before Darwin's evolutionary theory, it was believed that species are parts of a determined hierarchy, unchanging in time, and that humans are unique, unrelated to other animals. Darwin's theory, which he presented in his *On the Origin of Species* in 1859, radically changed the view on all living creatures as he proved that the populations of all animals change (and therefore form new species) in order to adapt to their environment, and that humans too have evolved from animals.

Since Darwinian theory, it has become acceptable to label the human as an animal with specific qualities, for humans are biologically part of the animal kingdom. The appellations *human animal* and *non-human animal* are widely used by philosophers and authors engaged in social and ethical problems connected with the human-animal relationship. The term *non-human animal* represents all living creatures except humans. Unfortunately, the biological similarity of human and non-human animals does not prevent humans from making a moral distinction between the two groups. The following passage is concerned with the ideology of speciesism as a belief in human superiority over non-human animals according to species membership.

The works of Peter Singer and Richard D. Ryder will be used for the presentation of the notions of speciesism. Peter Singer (born 1946) is an Australian philosopher and activist who specialises in applied ethics and labels himself as a hedonistic utilitarian. Richard D.

Ryder (born 1940) is a British writer, philosopher and animal rights advocate. He first coined the term *speciesism*. This term has become the base for the argumentation of animal rights advocates against animal exploitation and is often compared to the ideologies of sexism and racism which will be examined in the following section.

## 1.1 Speciesism

Speciesism is a form of discrimination practised by man against other species. It was first used by Richard D. Ryder in his pamphlet "Speciesism" (1971), which he wrote as a protest against animal experimentation. It is an idea that being a human is an adequate reason for humans to have greater moral rights than non-human animals. The lives of non-human animals are usually considered inferior, based on morally irrelevant physiological differences.

Singer believes that the interests of all living creatures are equal: All creatures that are able to live, feel and suffer have the right to live a full, unaffected natural life with no suffering (5-7). This statement also forms the core of animals rights which is a belief that humans do not have the right to exploit and use animals for own purposes – i.e. breed and kill them, experiment on them, hunt them, or use them as a form of entertainment (bbc.co.uk). Richard D. Ryder refers to the opposite view to the problem as *speciesism*. Singer uses this term and describes it as "a prejudice or attitude of bias in favour of the interests of members of one's own species" (6). Speciesism often appears alongside the terms *racism* and *sexism*, for all three ideologies prioritise the interests of one group of living beings over another. All these theories create a dichotomy between different participants, where the supremacy assigned to one group allows it to subjugate and abuse the other. In the same manner that racism and sexism attribute social and cultural value to the biological qualities of an individual, speciesism determines a moral value of a living creature on the basis of the genetic equipment of its wearer. Concepts such as oppression, prejudice, partiality, self-importance, exploitation, limitedness, or privilegedness are synonymous for all three forms of power dominance.

Mary Midgely (born 1919) compares speciesism to racism and stresses the difference between the two concepts – the difference between two biological classes is far more real and substantial than is the difference between two races. Species membership is a highly significant indicator of the interests of the member, but not the race. Opponents of racism fight against the same form of oppression as do the opponents of speciesism, yet the field is different. Both groups fight against the opinion that the impermeable boundaries of a selected species/group create moral limitations and that those outside this boundary do not merit consideration and respect. Genetic equipment is therefore the precondition for the moral frame of a group. Opponents call for flexibility and permeability of the boundaries and their extension.

Speciesism is compared to sexism as often as it is to racism. The concept of sexism is yet closer to speciesism than racism since it is based on physiological and biological differences. In the same way that women are physiologically distinct from men, a similar principle of distinction lies between animals and humans. The tight proximity of these two concepts can be seen in feminist theories that show that women have been ideologically compared to animals throughout history (Adams and Donovan 11). Aristotle claimed that women's corporeality predominates over their rationality. With rationality/reason at the peak of all principles in the ancient tradition, women, along with immigrants and slaves, were excluded from active social and political life. Until as late as the 20<sup>th</sup> century, women were deprived of their rights (right to vote, employment right, freedom of movement). Feminism (or one of the feminist theories) puts animals on the same disadvantaged side with women and accepts the parallel between sexism and speciesism. The deprecated dualism of man vs woman evokes a symbolic resemblance of women with animals if juxtaposed with the dualism of man vs animal. Adams and Donovan stress the importance of language and its power – animal similes and metaphors used for representing women label them as inferior and elicit thereby the presumption that they can be exploited and abused (11-15). By reserving *animal* for other animals, humans differentiate themselves from non-human animals, emphasising their own dissimilarity and inherent superiority.

Together with sexism and racism, speciesism shares the practices of discrimination and exclusion aimed against an oppressed group. The concept of speciesism was created as a counterpart for the concepts of racism and sexism to support the fight for animal rights. However, at the core of the matter, the fight for human rights and the fight for animal rights are incomparable since in the latter case an active actor, formulator and consumer of the rights is missing – at least until we are able to communicate with animals. The animal rights movement is therefore often criticised for being a Western sentimental fabrication and for its philosophical flaws regarding moral duties of humans and animals – unlike animals, the arguments go, humans that possess rights also bear the burden of responsibilities and duties that they are able and obliged to perform. Animals do not have such a capacity and therefore are not able to possess rights (Scruton 86-87).

The following chronological account will examine both the philosophical stance and the practical implications thereof. Furthermore, common behaviour typical for each period will be presented.

## **1.2 The Development of the Human-Animal Relationship**

The following passages will chronologically track the development of the European concepts that have reflected the human attitude towards animals. Since many of the philosophical concepts of the relation of humans with animals are handled in Coetzee's work, it is appropriate to discuss the view on animals in general and how it changed historically before the analysis of his writings. Although some of the plots of Coetzee's stories are not set in Europe, and the author himself was raised in South Africa, his parents, being of European ancestry, raised the writer in accordance with Western traditions, so the historical introduction to human-animal relationships will be presented mainly from the Western perspective. In his work, J. M. Coetzee focuses mainly on domestic animals, such as cats, dogs and livestock. These two categories will also form the heart of the historical outline.

It is interesting to note that although the human-animal relationship underwent numerous changes throughout time, there is one concept that has been repeated in

almost every stage of history. Until the 20<sup>th</sup> or even 21<sup>st</sup> century, animals were always inferior to people; man was at the summit of all things (with the exception of God above him) and animals were of a second rate category. Recently, the status of animals has changed as their rights have been promoted by animal rights movement activists that want to attribute animals some of the rights that are typical for humans such as satisfying their needs or the right for a full, unaffected life. Until this change, the sole criterion and gauge to improve the treatment of animals was that of the usefulness of animals for people. Motives for treating animals better changed over time – for example, to become a better, more civilised person in the era of the Enlightenment, or to prevent cruelty among people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. From the documents, it can be assumed that animals were not always treated well. Philosophers of each era often encouraged their readers to “treat animals better”, which suggests that the standard treatment of animals was not entirely kind. The overall aim of better animal treatment, however, was always the same – for people to feel better, to live better, to be better, but not for animals to have better lives in any way.

As regards the human-animal relationship, there have always been two perspectives on the problem. The first is that of the philosophers, thinkers and educated circles of society who investigate the world around themselves and are interested in relations and connections/context. The notions of this group of people are well documented in historical documents, essays or writings. The other side of the view is that of ordinary folk who rarely, if ever, encountered the opinions of the former group and who were also relatively absent from the historical record in comparison with the wealthy and educated. The result is a non-objective, biased view on the problem – no one can ever be certain about the thoughts of an 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century farmer and his view on animal abuse.

Moreover, since man has been at the top of the hierarchical pyramid for most of the time and historical documents are thus engaged chiefly with human lives, the record of the human-animal relationship is not entirely sufficient. Some information is offered in the works of the philosophers, writers and poets of each era; later, the most coherent and longest history of the human-animal relationship was provided by English authors that

would form the main source for the exploration of the relations of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the English heritage is applicable to many modern societies in the West, so to keep matters as clear as possible, these documentations will form the main focus later in the historical overview. The works of Tester, Ryder, and Franklin will be employed as the main sources for the outline. Keith Tester is a professor of sociology at Hull and his main focus is on the intertwining of culture and morality. Adrian Franklin (born 1955) is a British-born Australian sociologist.

Animals have always played another important role for humans insofar as they have been a source of meat. Meat-eating, however, was the privilege of the wealthy until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Meat used to be a scarce commodity, for it was relatively expensive and only the elite were able to afford it. Cooking and eating meat was a ritual that emphasised the difference between humans and animals, and it was acceptable only thanks to this emphasis. It was the expression of the inferiority of animals to humans and the expression of social power and status as regular meat-eating delimited the working class from the middle class.

The status of animals in Western society has its roots in two strong traditions – in Judaism and Ancient Greece. Later, these two concepts were blended into Christianity, which held a dominant influence on the shaping of human minds until the era of the secular Enlightenment, when more humane treatment of animals was introduced and emphasised. Over two thousand years, however, the status of animals has not significantly changed.

### **1.2.1 Ancient Greece**

Two hundred years before Aristotle, Pythagoras (570 – 495 BC) advocated an entirely distinct approach from the teachings of his contemporaries. This great mathematician and the founder of geometry was a vegetarian and taught his students that animals had souls that were similar to those of humans, which could reincarnate into a human (Ryder 17). This is an approach similar to that of Hinduism and Buddhism, where the notion of biological/species superiority was not supported in view of the fear that a human soul

could reincarnate into an animal soul, or vice versa. However, this was a minority opinion and, according to Ryder, disapproval towards animal cruelty at that time, if it did emerge, had two pragmatic reasons – firstly, it was imprudent to abuse animals in the sense that they were somebody’s property; and secondly, the animal cruelty was inadmissible since it harmed the soul of the aggressor (112). These powerful ideas, however, did not have many supporters and thus had a minor or no influence and did not lead to any change in the treatment of animals. Aristotle (384 – 322 BC), the greatest systematist of his time, arranged the world into categories and believed that all living organisms serve for the purposes of humankind: “. . . plants are for the sake of animals, and . . . the other animals are for the sake of human beings . . . If then nature makes nothing incomplete or pointless, it must have made all of them for the sake of human beings.” (14) In this sense, however, *human being* refers to a male Greek citizen only, and not a woman, immigrant, landless person or slave. Aristotle’s instrumentalist approach is, as will be seen later, in accordance with the Christian tradition of anthropocentrism, which assesses the value of things on the basis of their benefit or usefulness to people. In the light of the following passages it is important to mention that the reason people in Ancient Greece were allowed to treat animals wantonly was not because of species discrimination or species superiority – it was due to animals’ lack of reason (Aristotle 23). Furthermore, the absence of or the presence of reason was a sufficient argument for social discrimination such as enslaving a person or for a woman to obey a man. In many cases, animals were treated in the same way as were war captives, barbarians or slaves. The prevailing disregard of animals’ destiny in those times is exemplified by the cruel gladiatorial games, where countless thousands of wild animals were killed along with people, sometimes even hundreds during a single day (Kyle 181). To demonstrate the power and the extent of the Roman Empire, a massive selection of wild animals such as giraffes, zebras, lions, cheetahs, chimpanzees, crocodiles, hippopotamuses, or rhinoceroses were transported from all parts of the Empire to the Colosseum to be slaughtered.

### 1.2.2 Anthropocentrism – Christianity

A religion teaches people how to view the world, how to treat other people and animals. It sets moral values that people should recognise, it should help people to distinguish between right and wrong. Monotheistic religions such as Christianity, Judaism, or Islam have an inclination to see animals as second-rate creatures that should serve for the good of humans, who are at the centre of everything.

The roots of Judaeo-Christian tradition spring from the text of the Bible, the Old and the New Testament. In *The Book of Genesis*, God created heaven and earth and all the living creatures on it. After that, he created a man, Adam, in his own image and granted him domination “over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth” – making him the ruler of the world (*The Holy Bible: King James version*, Genesis 1. 26). Once in Eden, Adam and Eve lived peacefully in harmony next to animals and ate fruit from the trees. Only after Eve tasted the forbidden fruit, and gave it to Adam, and both were expelled from the Garden of Eden, God allowed them to kill animals and to use their hide and fur.

The Old Testament offers a paradoxical attitude to the human-animal relationship. On the one hand, human supremacy over animals is depicted as a battle in which only man can be the winner. On the other hand, however, Heaven is described as an ideal place of harmony where humans and animals live peacefully side by side. For people living on earth, unfortunately, Heaven is a place out of their reach, a utopian image which can only be entered after a distressful life full of struggle and temperance and, of course, after death. The message of the Bible about animals could therefore be summed up as follows: although we exploit and treat animals freely with no remorse while living our lives, we unceasingly yearn for a peaceful coexistence with them.

The Bible distinguishes between two kinds of animals – clean and unclean. This division refers solely to the matter of animals’ edibility. The Bible declares that all cud-chewing animals with split hooves such as cattle, sheep, goat and deer can be eaten. Unclean animals such as rabbits, pigs or camels are unfit to be eaten. Among birds, those that are

not labelled as unclean animals include chickens, turkeys or pheasants; and it is also possible to eat fish that have fins and scales. The Bible also includes certain types of insects in the clean and therefore edible category, such as locusts, crickets and grasshoppers (Leviticus 11. 3-23).

Throughout the Bible, animals frequently occur in the position of a sacrifice or scapegoat. It was only after the expulsion from Heaven when people started to offer animal sacrifices that provided forgiveness and removed people's sins – animals served as a substitute and died in place of the sinner. Later, animals were also used for taking away the sins from a city – the sins were loaded on the back of a goat that was sent away into the wilderness or desert to die (Leviticus 16. 22). It is important, however, to note the distinction that the Holy Writ makes between different kinds of animals regarding sacrifices. In the Old Testament, sacrificing only concerns livestock whose value was assessed by the degree of their utility and usefulness for humans. Domesticated animals are to be protected (to produce more), whereas the relationship with wild animals is always depicted as that of unceasing combat. The ultimate sacrifice was then made by Jesus Christ, who by giving his own life cleansed the world of sin (John 1. 29). Human and animal scapegoats are therefore interchangeable as Jesus replaced goats and sheep with his own life. It is clear that the anthropocentric perception of the world in the Judaeo-Christian tradition meets and echoes the Greek conception of the human-animal relationship where man is the pivot of events and animals and nature are created to serve as a means to human ends. In the era of scholasticism in 13<sup>th</sup> century, a significant perspective by Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274) emerges. Although he does not assign animals any rights, Aquinas advocates less cruel treatment of animals – an unprecedented attitude at the time. Aquinas links the notions of Christian tradition with those of Aristotle and shares Aristotle's opinion that animals are here for the sake of people. It is right to kill and eat animals, according to Aquinas, although we should avoid inflicting cruelty on them. This point of view has two prosaic reasons – a man should treat an animal considerately only if this animal serves as means for satisfying another man's needs, and animals should not be treated cruelly should this treatment lead to cruelty towards humans. People thus ought

to be kind to animals only when the purpose of the animal is to satisfy human needs. The former reason was aptly commented on by Peter Singer in his *Animal Liberation*: "... we cannot lovingly give food to turkeys because they are hungry, but only if we think of them as someone's Christmas dinner" (Singer 210). To sum Aquinas up, rational creatures (i.e. humans) are still superior to irrational creatures (i.e. animals), and inflicting cruelty on animals is acceptable only if it does not lead to cruelty to people. Biological superiority, i.e. the notion that humans are superior to animals based on biological and physiological differences, is clearly evident in his point of view.

### 1.2.3 The Renaissance

Although the era of Renaissance brings some positive perspectives on the treatment of animals, it brings man to the foreground of everything. Renaissance man is certain of his exceptional and powerful position and places still more weight on anthropocentrism by adopting Protagoras' "man is the measure of all things" that became a motto of humanism.<sup>1</sup> An individual human being is the ultimate source of value, rather than God or moral law, and humans feel the need to establish a boundary, a distance between animality and humanity which is achieved mercilessly by all possible means: "... aggressive behaviour towards animals was an active way for humans to define themselves as the centre of the universe and the zenith of God's work" (Thomas 51). The human attitude towards animals was greatly mechanised also due to the development of science and new discoveries in biology; experimenting on animals reached its most drastic form. Before presenting the notions of René Descartes, it is appropriate to mention a more amiable attitude towards animals that was propounded by Michele Montaigne (1533 – 1592). In his essay *Of Cruelty*, Montaigne argues that the fact that all animals (i.e. non-human and human animals) were created by the same master and are therefore of one family should prompt us to show some affection towards and regard for them. "Amongst other vices, I mortally hate cruelty" (76), says Montaigne, and adds a perpetually recurrent argument

---

1 Renaissance humanism, a philosophical stance, tried to redefine man's position in the world and to understand his task. It was a cultural and educational programme where man was placed at the centre of the search for knowledge and was therefore the ultimate authority making the system anthropocentric.

for the ethical treatment of all living creatures – a warning against a possible slippery slope when cruelty performed on animals could lead to cruelty towards humans. Montaigne also illustrates this concern of his with the example of Ancient Greece, where after they had accustomed themselves to seeing non-human animals slaughtered, they proceeded to the slaughter of men and gladiators, with no scruples (290). Montaigne’s reasoning, however, did not have much of an effect on people’s views. The greatest experimenter on animals, Rene Descartes (1596 – 1650), argues that animals are automata that might act as if they are conscious, but really are not (Regan and Singer 13-19). Until then, the line between humans and animals was somewhat unclear and not specifically defined (Koops et al. 22-24). Descartes drew a clear boundary between humans and animals and created a world of difference between the two. One of the main reasons for thinking that animals do not possess consciousness is the fact that animals cannot acquire language like humans do, that they are unable to express their thoughts. Animals are incapable of doing so even if they have some ability to speak (like parrots), yet even humans with impaired speaking organs are capable of developing a language of communication (i.e. sign language), argues Descartes. Since the Catholic tradition was still greatly influential, Descartes grants humans and only humans a soul. Animals do not possess this quality and are understood as mere mechanical bodies. Thus, having no souls, animals cannot experience pain. Justified by these notions, there were no restraints in experimenting on animals. Descartes and his followers wanted to explore the mechanics of animals and so performed *vivisections* – experiments on live animals, cutting the brutes<sup>2</sup> open to reveal their beating hearts and mutilating them in every conceivable way. The animal’s whining while suffering pain was explained by Descartes as no different from the sound of an improperly functioning machine – “a crying dog, Descartes maintained, is no different from a whining gear that needs oil” (Francione 111). Legitimised by the

---

2 The term *brutes* was often used in Renaissance to refer to non-human animals. Half a century before Descartes, Italian anatomist Hieronymus Fabricius (1537 – 1619) in his *On Speech and its Instruments* and *On the Vocal Communication of Brutes* (1603) makes a distinction between human and non-human animals by using the term *brutes*. Fabricius also says, as does Descartes later, that the characteristic feature that completely differentiates man from other animals is speech – the means by which the concepts of mind are expressed.

conception that animals cannot feel any pain insofar as they have no soul, vivisection did not represent a moral problem. Naturally, backlash of aversion against such an attitude towards animals arose. Based on the physiological resemblance of humans and animals, Voltaire contradicted Descartes by asking whether nature would design all the body organs of feeling that humans possess in the same way in animals so that they might not feel anything (273). He answers the question himself by stating that one should not search for such an unreasonable dialectic in nature. Voltaire also challenged the instrumental right of humans to exploit the world without limits, claiming that it would be “ridiculous . . . to maintain that nature had worked from all time in order to adjust herself to the inventions of our arbitrary arts” (122). Among other things, he alludes to the notion that animals are here but to serve people and satisfy their needs – to be exploited. Just as hands were not created to be gloved, animals were not created to be used for their hide and meat. Voltaire still affirms an anthropocentric view of the world, although now within the bounds of moral responsibility.

#### **1.2.4 The Enlightenment**

Throughout the era of Enlightenment, humane or moral responsibility is a matter of debates which once again brings changes in the status of animals in the human-animal relationship. Enlightenment humanists endeavoured primarily to emancipate human concerns and interests from the control of God, although the value of and interest in Nature grew significantly. Observations of the natural world became popular, and the foundations of modern zoology, ornithology, botany and other life sciences were laid down (Franklin 13). More hospitable treatment of animals was encouraged in the name of human refinement and civilization by the Enlightenment authors (Voltaire, Hume, Rousseau, Kant) – as opposed to cruelty and violence committed on animals which was now believed to damage one’s character. The reason for doing so was quite pragmatic – such behaviour was conceived as a means towards the well-being of man. According to Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804), animals are only a means, the meaning of which is imposed into them only by their usefulness to man – unlike man who is the end. We have no duties to animals – our duties towards animals are in fact indirect duties to mankind. By being

cruel to animals, people are damaging the kind and humane qualities in themselves which they ought to practise to cultivate their duties to humanity – consequently, being kind to animals benefits one’s character (Kant 212).

Another Enlightenment philosopher, Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778), shows a considerably greater interest in nature believing that people in a natural state are essentially animals, having the same needs and controlled by their instincts and intuition. Rousseau, wandering in forests, finds nobility in wildness and beauty and perfection in nature. As opposed to the extremist Cartesian thinking, Rousseau enriches merely mechanical bodies of animals by senses, saying “all animals have ideas, since all animals have senses” (95) and attributes the elemental principle of inborn love *amour de soi*, or self-respect, self-preservation to them. Such love, which awakens the innate survival instinct, is a motive power in an animal and primitive natural man. Originally, all animals, including humans, were treated equally by nature (94) and man, living in nature, was free and independent (122) – Rousseau’s natural man does not possess reason, language or society and is therefore comparable to animals. A turn arises when natural man separates himself from nature and other (non-human) animals and becomes a social animal, a civil man, in which Rousseau sees the origin of alienation that causes inequality, dependency, violence and unhappiness. With the invention of civil society and particularly with the invention of private ownership, says Rousseau, man becomes corrupted and degenerated both morally and physically. The new social order with its laws brings tragedy to mankind in the form of vanity and contempt on one side, and shame and envy on the other (188). Rousseau thus believes that animal behaviour in humans is natural for man and even more beneficial for him than social, modern behaviour.

A great change and substantial contribution to the discussion as to whether and why we should take animals into consideration is brought on by Enlightenment thinker Jeremy Bentham and his ethical theory of utilitarianism. “By the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever according to the tendency it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question: or, what is the same thing in other words to promote or to oppose

that happiness”(Bentham 11). It is a principle of equal consideration of all needs and interests. An individual should make a decision only after they have considered all parties that could be affected by their pursuance and choose the solution which offers the highest possible degree of satisfying all the needs of all participants. The principle of utilitarianism could also be explained as behaviour where our decision should be made only after imagining ourselves in the place of all those who could be affected by our action. Utilitarians believe that the interests and the needs of all are equal. In his book *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislations*, Jeremy Bentham does not make a distinction between the suffering of men, women, Africans, Europeans, or animals. The fact that our actions could cause pain to animals has become the main argument for animals’ rights to considerate and kind treatment. Bentham summarises his argument with: “The question is not *Can they reason?* or *Can they talk?* but *Can they suffer?*” (12). What is thus new in the theory of Bentham is admitting that animals are sentient and that they have needs. It is therefore wrong to deprive them of their needs and cause them harm – all the more so considering that the suffering of animals was well documented and also provable in those days. Utilitarianism represents a highly rational and elaborated system of ethics and it is utilitarianism that gives the basis for the argumentation of the defenders of animal rights against speciesism.

### **1.2.5 The 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

The turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought significant changes in nearly every aspect of life across all social classes. With respect to human-animal relations, the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be marked as full of dissensions. On the one hand, people wanted to protect animals against cruel treatment and wanted to have animals as pets in their homes; on the other hand, there was a tolerated, ubiquitous abuse of animals that could be seen everywhere in the streets in the form of animal fights and animal exploitation. Over the course of 19<sup>th</sup> century the mood changed, however, and towards the end of the century, with the growth of compassionate feelings towards animals, explicit animal abuse was greatly reduced.

With the development of industry and technology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, increasing numbers of people moved to the cities which offered more employment opportunities. And although people were growing less dependent on animal power, they became increasingly dependent on the emotional aspect of our non-human counterparts. In an urbanised culture, sentimentality towards animals elicited a great interest in pet-keeping so that people could once again have animals near themselves (Franklin 12-13). With this distance between the two, there was no need symbolically to differentiate humans from animals anymore, which allowed people to create an emotional attachment to animals. Furthermore, the increasing separation from animals gave rise to a certain human interest in animals.

However, the rapid urbanisation of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century also brought about economic depression, food shortage and extreme inequality for the urban working class. The working class could hardly afford animal pets for their amusement, unlike the aristocracy which offered fine conditions for their pet companions. Pet keeping was then the privilege of the societal elite as the movement to towns was first performed by the rural aristocracy and upper classes, and developed into a mass concern only in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The demand for animal protection grew alongside the urge for animal companions and the first animal protection legislations were passed, albeit markedly different from the animal laws of the present.<sup>3</sup> The first animal laws still did not attribute any rights to animals nor did they protect their general welfare. The idea of kindness to animals, however, gained immense popularity and support.

Yet there was a sharply dissimilar mind-set of animal exploitation which stood in contrast with the 19<sup>th</sup> century's popularity and passion for pet-keeping and the rudiments of

---

3 The very first modern animal protection legislations were passed in Ireland (1635) and in the UK (1822), although these were a far cry from animal protection as we know it today. The Irish law forbade attaching a plough to horses' tails and pulling off sheep's wool. According to Ryder, it was referred to as "the cruelty used to beasts". The UK act, also known as Martin's Act, took into consideration only a handful of domesticated animals and made it a crime to treat them "cruelly or to inflict unnecessary suffering upon them".

animal protection. Before being replaced by motorised transport, horses and other draft animals suffered great cruelties associated with the most routine economic activities such as transport. Moreover, the enormous popularity of rural leisure time pleasures with animals inflicted the worst cruelties to animals, as will be explained further.

#### **1.2.5.1 Animal Fights**

This specific exploitative human-animal relationship is represented by animal fights. Animal fighting and baiting have been popular among different social strata since Ancient Greece. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century animal fights (bull and bear baits in particular) became popular between British aristocracy and royalty. Later, animal fights were introduced to common folk by the authorities as a form of relaxation and entertainment (Massey 13). Animal fights also served as a gambling activity for the peasantry. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the most popular of these were bear and bull baiting, where a larger animal was tied to a post so that its movability was limited, and it was attacked by two or more dogs. However, by the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century it seemed that animal fights had reached their end – bears became very scarce due to the number of fights and therefore very expensive, and the royalty and many of the wealthy simply lost their interest in bull baiting. People, however, were not willing to give up their gory and cruel entertainment and a less expensive form thereof – dogfighting – was presented. Since dogfighting required far less space and expenses, it became immensely popular among all the social classes in the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century until 1860.<sup>4</sup> Prior to urbanisation, most people were accustomed to animal cruelties of some sort since it was a normalised part of their everyday lives – as Russell explains, “the rich and poor alike made their living by raising animals for the slaughter” (qtd. in Massey 22). People lived in the immediate vicinity of animals, usually sharing a house with them (the lower classes in particular). And although people were allowed to treat their animals wantonly, they realised their dependency on livestock. Later, however, city dwellers lost contact with this reality and were no longer accustomed to being exposed to killing animals and were therefore shocked by the violence of blood sports (Massey 22). The

---

4 The enormous popularity of this sport indicates the fact that a new breed of dog was created just for the purposes of dogfighting which was characterised as bloodthirsty, with an innate fighting instinct and a natural inclination to attack the throat of its opponent – the Staffordshire Bull Terrier.

newly-formed urban middle class no more supported such entertainment and seek to ban these practises in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, strong voices calling for the elimination of ill-treatment of animals emerged. The campaign was aimed at the lower classes and designed to civilise their behaviour, considered too crude and indecent for respectable educated society. The argument for curtailing animal cruelties went as it has already been presented several times in this overview – the leading voice of the anti-cruelty movement in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Lord Erskine, once again stresses the possible connection between the human cruel treatment of animals and violence in society. Moreover, the working class of this time was implicitly labelled as cruel (Franklin 23), and their forms of leisure activities involving animals were considered too violent. This argument was highly appealing for the governing classes, as it promised containment of violence among inhabitants so that the newly urbanised rural working class could be kept under control.<sup>5</sup> To civilise the manners of the working class and control them was the main purpose of this action. Increasing government control of violence in society entailed the decline of violence and cruelty in everyday life. This change in society took place, according to Franklin, also as a result of the newly-established changes in politics that promoted peaceful democratic means in power struggle in the form of the orderly manner of a parliament (20). This new strategy was slowly transferred into other spheres of civil life and people were increasingly less tolerant to being exposed to violence of any kind.<sup>6</sup> With the development of science, a greater distance was placed between humans and animals – though it also elicited in people a greater respect for life. The superiority of the human is marked even more significantly since man was truly mastering the world through abstract, rational thought and science. This newly-gained status called for a change in human behaviour – for civilising man's manners. The newly-established distance between animals and humans

---

5 In England, this action was taken extremely thoroughly – apart from the elimination of working class violent leisure activities, transport and public behaviour was controlled by new by-laws, the consumption of alcohol was regulated and the streets were cleared of crowds and traders.

6 Over the course of nineteenth century, public executions were gradually eliminated and criminals were imprisoned instead.

was also projected into language and highlighted still more when, during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the word *animal* became a “pejorative label which could be applied to humans who seem to be little more than objects ruled by their natural passions and urges”. Tester also points out that “without the ordering of social life, humans would be mere beasts” (88-89).

### **1.2.5.2 Angling and Hunting**

Although there was a great demand for anti-cruelty and anti-violence laws, as stated in the paragraphs above, it is interesting that hunting and angling, another cruel leisure activity and a form of animal exploitation, were excluded from the prohibited animal cruelties. Hunting and angling represented a traditional gentleman’s sport and it was the utmost expression of social power. This exciting form of amusement was a source of pleasure for hunters and reinforced yet further the boundaries between humans and animals. Franklin is clear about the reason of the exclusion of hunting and angling from the new anti-cruelty legislation – the object of the anti-cruelty legislation was change in working-class behaviour; middle-class sports were not in the scope of the reformists (29). The legislators were middle class themselves – they naturally did not want to curtail this popular entertainment of theirs. Besides, hunting and angling were greatly popular at this time and, according to Franklin, were considered to represent a democratic means of entertainment, and were therefore difficult to purge.

Until the mid-nineteenth century, the word sport was used in association with hunting and angling.<sup>7</sup> Only after the elimination of violence from sports did the word start to represent the human game-playing as we know it today. This removal of cruelties in sports is certainly connected with changes in politics, as explained above, and its goal was also to suppress violence among the citizens. However, as the overall tolerance for violence was gradually diminishing in society anyway, it was only a question of time before hunting and angling were replaced by modern sports that are more organised, standardised, rule-

---

7 According to K. Thomas, in the seventeenth century the word *sport* represented a contest between two animals. Its modern use came later via such contests; however, as late as in the mid-nineteenth century it was still associated with hunting and angling.

bound, and less violent. Hunting and angling, however, remain very popular to this day, although with the development of animal rights in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many voices have expressed their disapproval towards this exciting form of leisure.

According to Tester, two main principles regarding the approach to animals emerge around the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – the Demand for Similitude and the Demand for Difference (88-89). The Demand for Similitude extended Rousseau's perspective that humans are animals who have lost their contact with nature, leading to the decay of life. Condemned society and its reason places a barrier between humans and animals and the only way to become happier and healthier again is to live in accordance with the dictates of the natural, organic being. Further, humans are not designed to eat meat and are therefore vegetarians. This principle was applied by several influential writers and poets (Ritson, Thoreau, Shelley). The Demand for Difference might be described as a "sentimental" attitude. This principle is based on the unique position of man and the importance of society. It attempts to make humans more responsive to things that could be known only by humans, the principle of life in the first place. From this point of view, according to Tester, "animals were useful because they were a stick to beat social unruliness and 'beastliness'" (89). Those adopting this view today are animal lovers – both hunters/pet keepers/meat eaters and the protectors of animals (concerned about animal conservation) and animal rights.

Romanticism and its sentimental attitude towards nature greatly influenced the latter approach to animals. It led to the first animal protection laws in the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century and later, in 1970s it resulted in the animal rights movement. Peter Singer, with his 1975 work *Animal Liberation*, had a great impact on millions of people. The crucial idea lied within the rejection of anthropocentrism and the instrumental attitude to animals. Singer sees the era after 1970 as a clash of two ideas – the quantitative growth of consumption and the qualitative growth of man<sup>8</sup> – and offers alternatives and instructions on how to achieve more moral and humane ends. Tester states that the

---

8 Singer opened the topic of animal rights in the time of radical changes of social values. Many thinkers and scientists, such as Tom Regan, Richard D. Ryder, or Mary Midgley after the publication of *Animal Liberation*, started to comment on the animal-human relationship.

animal rights movement is a combination of the two principals that he calls the Demand for Similitude and the Demand for Difference (149).

As already stated above, animals have also functioned as source of food. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, meat was a scarce commodity and mainly the wealthy could afford its regular consumption. In the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, a radical change in lifestyle made the accessibility of meat much easier even for the lower classes, the reasons for which will be explained in the next section.

## **1.2.6 The 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

### **1.2.6.1 1900s – 1970s**

The main aim of most of the first 70 years of the twentieth century could be described as the endeavour to improve people's standard of living. The historical events of the first half of the twentieth century had a great influence on people's lives and therefore on their relations with animals. Interaction with animals in this period was explicitly anthropocentric – animals were mainly used for people's pleasure, amusement and as source of food.

The first half of the century brings Fordism,<sup>9</sup> which is essentially an equilibrium of mass production and mass consumption of all products – be it motorised transport, clothes, or food. Meat consumption started to increase in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the development of animal rearing, freezing technologies and also as a result of the extension of grazing in some parts of the world. The rationalisation of meat production made the access to it much easier in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – unnecessary animal movement was reduced to minimum as slaughtering, butchery and packing were spatially concentrated (outside the cities), and new animal factories efficiently controlled all the conditions of animal health and growth. Meat was strongly recommended by the authorities in all Western countries as being an important component of a balanced diet.

---

9 Rather than cheap motor transport, Fordism represents the visions of Henry Ford, the vision of modern capitalism. Henry Ford wanted for his workers to live in better conditions than those in which the working class of the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century was forced to live. This meant higher wages and cheaper, mass-produced goods.

Meat, however, did not need much promotion, for it is the essential centrepiece of any Western meal anyway (Douglas 250-273). Although meat eating was an inseparable part of people's lives and vegetarianism was regarded as being rather eccentric during most of this period, the source of meat – animals – represent a highly ambiguous category. Animals that were reared for meat were removed from the sights of city dwellers in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – only pets, city animals such as pigeons, squirrels and horses (as a means of transport) remained. This spatial separation from humans went hand-in-hand with a kind of 'de-animalisation' of livestock. While pets were humanised – given names, lived near humans and were inedible – and wild animals that represented "true nature" evoked sentiments, livestock was neither of the two. Livestock was gradually regarded as a human product and therefore legitimately consumable, like any other human product. Wild animals were, on the other hand, something to be protected, and sentiment among people increased towards them as a result of the extinction of species and the devastation of habitat. Livestock animals, however, were increasingly differentiated from meat. In the beginning, butcher's shops showed carcasses and semi or un-plucked birds and the animals the meat came from were easily recognisable. Now, smaller portions of bloodless, plucked, skinned and boned pieces of meat were displayed in the shops and supermarkets – with no obvious visible connection to particular animals. Moreover, livestock were not in the scope of the animal protection and sentimentalisation that wild animals enjoyed.

Another form of animal consumption of this period is connected with leisure which could be summed up into three main types: pet-keeping, interest in wild animals, hunting and angling. All three types were first introduced in the circles of the wealthy.

Not every animal could become a pet but the range widened as the century proceeded. What is markedly shown is the difference in species and breeds that are kept by families of different social classes. While the wealthy kept fancy ponies, larger exotic pedigree dogs and Asiatic cats, the working class was more likely to keep crossbreed cats and dogs, mice or caged birds.

Wild animals enjoyed great popularity in this period since indigenous wild species could hardly be seen elsewhere except in books or in zoos. Furthermore, the acknowledgement of diminishing populations of indigenous animals gave rise to sentiment among people and enhanced passive activities such as book-reading or visiting zoos. Zoos, however, emphasise the superiority of humans, putting animals in cages behind bars in a manner similar to that of war captives or prisoners, show animals to visitors for their amusement and point out the supremacy of humans. Wild animals often featured in hunter story books where the heroism of the hunter was glorified and where the domination of Europeans over places such as Africa or India was presented (Franklin 43). Passive interests in animals reached massive popularity with the invention and spread of television in the form of nature films and documents. Later, however, in the 1960s, when extinctions and ecological dangers threatening the lives of indigenous animals were talked about in TV documentaries, the dismal conditions of indigenous peoples were shown alongside the struggles of animals.

Since the problematic issues connected with animals (such as meat production, hunting and animal experimentation in cosmetics and science) were hidden from the sights of people, it took some time for them to be acknowledged. Moreover, the two world wars occupied people's minds with more acute problems than animal well-being. This topic was ready to be re-opened in the 70s, with a new reflexive approach to animals. During the same time, social sciences such as sociology, philosophy, economy and politics science also started to open broader environmental topics. In 1975, when Peter Singer published his extremely successful *Animal Liberation* defending animal rights, people were already calling for a change in human-animal relations and felt their moral responsibility for the lives of animals.

The first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought greater good for humans with its reduced working hours, higher wages and fine goods obtainable for nearly anyone. However, the price for the improvement of human lives came at the expense of animal lives. This was set to change in the late twentieth century.

### 1.2.6.2 From the 1970s Onwards

The late twentieth century is significant for the love of animals that grew massively among people. People became more concerned about the well-being of animals and the human-animal relationship became politicised.

In cities, nature areas with ponds and nesting sites were built to encourage small mammals and birds to live there. In Britain in the 1980s, many rare species were under threat in many rural areas. In London, however, as animal lovers left food for them in gardens and also gave them breeding sites, these animals were able to survive and thrive. City farms and urban zoos were established and people were encouraged to take responsibility for feeding animals and to support endangered species with money. Natural habitat was simulated in the zoos so that animals had to find their food and so humans could observe real animal cultures without venturing too far from their homes. TV animal documentaries, films and shows became immensely popular and changed from the pre-1970s scientific lectures about mammals into interactive shows that covered a far broader range of animals, including nocturnal or subterranean fauna.

Pets, or animal companions increased in number again among all social classes after 1970 – in Britain, dogs and cats were at the top of popularity, the population of caged birds, on the contrary, halved. Furthermore, the therapeutic role of animals started gradually to be appreciated.<sup>10</sup> There are several reasons for the increased urge among humans to be closer to animals. One of them, according to Franklin, is that the social and economic gave rise to changes in the notion of ontological insecurity (56). The postmodernist distaste for government and bureaucracy elicited freedom and liberation, although it also gave rise to a certain lack of direction and therefore a sense of confusion, loss and anxiety. Human relationships were no longer to be relied on, for traditional institutions such as marriage or family disintegrated and relationships became more shallow and fragile. As maintaining and establishing human relationships became problematic, animals started to function as

---

<sup>10</sup> According to the Council for Science and Society (1988), animal therapy was applied to a wide variety of people suffering from heart disease, loneliness, impaired mobility, to the elderly, the seriously disabled and to prisoners, and also in the treatment of patients with schizophrenia or depressions.

substitute love objects and companions. Having achieved such an important role in people's lives, people started to treat their animal companions as family members – specialised food companies provided special foods for pets, pet psychologists and trainers emerged and pet graveyards were also established. With the changing view on animals and increasing interest and love for them, meat-eating decreased from the 1970s onwards and vegetarianism spread significantly during this period. Meat was no longer the centrepiece of Western meals, and the presented health risks connected with excessive meat consumption raised concerns about the human diet. The conversion or semi-conversion to vegetarianism was not only the result of health worries, but also had ethical, moral, sentimental, ecological and religious reasons and it was a protest against farming methods.

With the increased love and interest for animals, voices calling for animal rights started to strengthen. Animal protection groups were established throughout the world (Greenpeace being the best known), a political party promoting animal rights was even founded in Netherlands. Several animal protection acts were passed and several animal protection organizations were founded around this period throughout the world – for example, Humane Slaughter Act in America designed to decrease livestock suffering (already in 1958), The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act in India in 1964, Animal Liberation Front founded in Britain in 1976 that soon spread to America, or American organization advocating animal rights PETA (People for Ethical Treatment of Animals) founded in 1980. However, it seems the popularity of animals rise only according to their endangerment status – whales, for example, only became popular when their numbers declined to a critical point. Another significant fact is that nowadays there are no wild areas that are not under the control of man.

To free animals from humans, there must be no relationship between the two, explains Franklin (27). However, paradoxically, although humans try to liberate animals as far as possible, the current situation is that humans make decisions about animals' lives and their future nevertheless. As Franklin says: "No animals are safe and their only hope of

survival lies with the willingness of humans to take moral responsibility for their protection” (59). Despite all efforts, animals are now entirely dependent upon us.

## 2 J. M. Coetzee

### 2.1 Life and Work

John Maxwell Coetzee, a renowned South-African novelist, essayist, linguist, professor and translator, awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2003, has long been handling controversial topics both in his fictional and non-fictional work. His writings are often described as austere, elusive and politically urgent, although the author himself has always insisted on the apolitical nature of his writing and resisted making public pronouncements which would reduce his work to a set of political beliefs. Nevertheless, critics have constantly warned readers not to read Coetzee's work as merely as a straightforward political allegory.

Born in Cape Town in 1940 to Afrikaner parents of Dutch (from his father's side) and German-Polish (from his mother's side) origin, Coetzee grew up in a resolutely Anglophile family, although he spoke both English and Afrikaans. After moving to Worcester, an oppressive provincial town, Coetzee, and his parents felt estranged from fellow Afrikaners and the laws that divided the society according to racial diversity, the white Afrikaners being considered to be the supreme group. According to Coetzee himself, having become detached from his ethnic roots and having been born to English as his native tongue, he hopes one day there will be a society, or a "pool" in his own terms, with "no predominant colour in which differences wash away" (*Doubling* 342). Strongly influenced by living in the apartheid era and witnessing the concurrent changes of South African society, isolation of an individual or a group in form of separation or even segregation is among the recurring themes in Coetzee's work.

Coetzee received his primary, secondary and higher education in Cape Town; for secondary schooling, he attended a school run by a Catholic order. He entered the University of Cape Town in 1957 and received a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in English and later in Mathematics in the early 1960s. Coetzee then spent some time in England, where he worked as a computer programmer. After he was awarded a Master of Arts degree from the University of Cape Town, Coetzee took his PhD in linguistics at the

University of Texas at Austin. His doctoral dissertation was a computer stylistic analysis of the early fiction of Samuel Beckett.

He started his teaching career at the State University of New York at Buffalo in the early 1970s, and after returning to Africa he continued to teach literature at the University of Cape Town, where he was promoted Professor of General Literature in 1983. Shortly before he received Nobel Prize in 2003, Coetzee relocated to Australia,<sup>11</sup> where he holds an honorary position at the English Department of the University of Adelaide.

Coetzee has recently been criticised for his tendency for blurring the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Since the publication of *Disgrace* in 1999, Coetzee prefers to work across categories and genres, blending memoir with fiction, academic criticism with novelist language, and refuses to “recognise the border that has traditionally separated political theory from fictional narrative” (Moses 2008). He thus creates a metafictional narrative in which he “generates ontological and epistemological questions for the readers” (British Council 2015).

The author is famous for strongly valuing his privacy, he rarely expresses his own personal and political views publicly, gives public interviews and readings, or signs his work;<sup>12</sup> he once expressed his great discomfort when he was interviewed without knowing the exact wording of the interviewer’s questions beforehand and explained that he was a perfectionist and did not like to state anything without reflection. In 2011, Coetzee introduced his reading for the Jaipur Literature Festival by saying: “Like most people I have opinions, but I confess I don’t find my opinions particularly interesting” (Books Live 2011). His political and ethical opinions and beliefs are, however, implemented in his work. His very first novel *Dusklands*, published in 1974, is an oblique commentary on the war in Vietnam (Coetzee had earlier been involved in anti-Vietnam war protests in the United States). A different approach of embedding the author’s personal opinions into his work is

---

11 The act of Coetzee’s moving to Australia is often described as a self-imposed exile after Coetzee’s novel *Disgrace* was criticised for exploiting racist stereotypes.

12 Some organisations publish Coetzee’s work and offer signed copies to support financially organisations nurturing neglected children or organisations concerned with animal protection.

represented by his 2007 novel *A Diary of a Bad Year*, in which Coetzee confuses his readers by blurring his own figure and that of the main (supposedly fictional) character, which is an aging author with Coetzee's initials who has written some of Coetzee's real books and who has recently moved to Australia. A very similar treatment of the main protagonist may be detected in other works by Coetzee – in *Elizabeth Costello*, where Elizabeth, the main character, is an ageing author from Australia and a vegetarian, or in *Disgrace*, where the main character, David Lurie, is a middle-aged professor of literature in Cape Town. Indeed, Coetzee has himself stated that “all writing is autobiography” (*Doubling* 391).

Coetzee, being a vegetarian and a Voiceless<sup>13</sup> Patron, is deeply concerned with animal rights. In Sydney in 2007, Hugo Weaving delivered a speech on Coetzee's behalf in which he railed against animal cruelties and the contemporary animal husbandry industry. In his work, Coetzee congruently describes problems connected with such topics, particularly in his novel *Disgrace* (1999), the novella *The Lives of Animals* (1999), and in the short story “The Old Woman and The Cats” (2013), the content of each of which will be presented briefly in the following sub-chapters. Prior to that, a general tendency in African literature will be presented with a focus on the political situation in South Africa and the portrayal of animals.

## 2.2 South African Literary Themes and J. M. Coetzee

South African literature is concerned mainly with two themes that are discussed at great length, two interlaced topics inseparable from one another. One discussion brings back to life the times of colonisation, which started in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the Dutch and continued later with the British colonists. The second evolves from the previous theme and discusses the apartheid system that ruled between 1948 and 1994.

In the second half of the 1990s, when the transition from apartheid to democratic government took place, the hope that “the time when humanity will be restored across the face of society” arose (*Doubling* 35). Two years after the first democratic elections in

13 An Australian animal protection institute which works on improvement in the legal protection of factory animals and kangaroos in Australia.

South Africa in 1994, the so called Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established by the Government of National Unity in Cape Town to help South Africans to cope with apartheid atrocities. The TRC investigated human rights abuses that occurred between 1960 and 1994, recorded victim testimonies, helped the victims to restore their dignity and could grant amnesty to the perpetrators of crimes during the apartheid era.<sup>14</sup> The TRC was intended to reconcile white and black communities, provided that the whole truth was expressed on both sides.

Coetzee often employs animal metaphors in his portrayal of both victims and perpetrators, as will be examined in the practical part of the thesis. According to Jolly, the same usage of the language of animalism was recorded in the TRC testimonies of victims and perpetrators; there is a certain confusion cast on the two terms, since both opposing parties – victims and perpetrators – are labelled as “animals”. Victim-survivors often describe themselves being treated “like animals”, “as objects like we [were] not human beings” (Jolly 156), whereas the behaviour of the perpetrators is compared to “the beasts or wild animals” and characterised as “behaving like animals” (Jolly 155-156).

Gradually, a change in South African writings emerged, the themes of which no longer followed the traditional portrayal of racial difference but shifted towards a wider variety of themes and topics associated with various dimensions of human existence. The focus of (new) post-apartheid writings was to highlight the importance of facing the truth about the traumatic history in order to promote forgiveness between victims and perpetrators, and to praise the multi-racial spectrum of the “rainbow nation”. The initial euphoria, however, was quickly replaced by disillusionment as the terrible images of the past continued to haunt people, and reconciliation seemed increasingly less possible. In this context, Coetzee’s novel *Disgrace* received considerable attention since the events recounted in the book underlined the impossibility to achieve full closure on the traumatic past (Boehmer 140).

---

14 Amnesty was granted only for those perpetrators whose crimes were politically motivated and who fully disclosed their actions.

## 2.3 Characteristics of the Selected Works

### 2.3.1 *Disgrace*

The 1999 novel, for which Coetzee received the Man Booker Prize, is a parable of the contemporary “new South Africa”. Written in prose stripped of all superfluous ornamentation, *Disgrace* presents an image of the seriously distorted present of post-apartheid society. In *Disgrace*, animals in general and dogs in particular are among the central themes, in both the literal and metaphorical sense.

A 52-year-old professor of the Cape Town Technical University, David Lurie, is the main protagonist of the story. He is twice-divorced, and in his free time he regularly meets with a prostitute, and works on a libretto for an opera about Byron.

Unfortunately for Lurie, the prostitute, with whom he enjoys weekly sex, finds out he has tried to seek her outside their business encounters and quits the game. Lurie searches for a replacement and soon becomes entangled in an affair with one of his students, Melanie Isaacs. As a result, he is reported and summoned to face a disciplinary committee. Since David refuses to apologise and confess publicly for his professional and moral culpability, he is dismissed from his position at the university. To avoid public confession, he retreats to his daughter Lucy, who lives on a small isolated farm in the mountains and earns her money from five kennels of working dogs which Lucy boards, and by selling flowers and other garden produce.

A short visit turns out to be a temporary relocation. David occupies himself with working on his libretto, helping Lucy’s former farmhand Petrus to take care of the dogs at the farm and helping Lucy’s friend Bev Shaw, a healer and a death escort for redundant or ill animals, mostly dogs, at an animal clinic situated in a nearby town.

One day, David and Lucy are assaulted by three black men at the farm, who kill the dogs and rape Lucy, who learns that she has become pregnant only several weeks after the attack. Although David tries to convince Lucy to report the crime to the police and to undergo an abortion, she refuses to do so, seeing the act and its consequences in the broader historical context of the guilt of whites in South Africa.

Towards the end of the novel, a significant change can be marked in the character of David Lurie – initially a hard-hearted womaniser who feels nothing but repulsion when a dog at the clinic wants to lick his hand before Bev injects it with a deadly substance, David, impacted by the recent humiliating events on Lucy’s farm and by encounters with death at the clinic, eventually finds a kind of compassion in himself, apologises to Melanie’s parents, and at the very end is able to express his love towards his favourite dog at the clinic that is about to be put to sleep by Bev.

### ***2.3.2 The Lives of Animals***

In 1997, J. M. Coetzee was asked to give a lecture at Princeton University as a part of the Tanner Lectures on Human Values and, rather than expressing his academic or philosophical conclusions, he chose to read his meta-fictional novella concerned with animal rights and cruelty, instead. The novella consists of two chapters, “The Philosophers and the Animals” and “The Poets and the Animals”.<sup>15</sup>

Similarly to Coetzee himself, the central character, an ageing Australian novelist Elizabeth Costello is asked to give guest lectures at the fictitious Appleton University in Massachusetts. The sequence of events is, however, narrated through the eyes of Costello’s son John, who happens to be a teacher at the very same university. So as not to awaken any sensation, John has kept the information about their relationship secret. A visit by his mother gives rise to an inner conflict in John, tossing him from filial loyalty on one side to irritation on the other, as Costello presents her extreme opinions and arouses indignation among his colleagues and his wife Norma, a vocal critic of Elizabeth’s opinions, who ceaselessly discusses Costello’s notions with John.

Although Costello is expected to speak about literature, she chooses to deliver a speech about factory farming and animal slaughtering in her first lecture, and presents an analogy

---

15 In 1999, the two-part work was extended with an introduction by political philosopher Amy Gutman and a collection of commentaries by four members of Princeton University: philosopher Peter Singer, Professor Marjorie Garber, Indologist Wendy Doniger and anthropologist Barbara Smuts. Originally, the novella was published accompanied with academic footnotes and scholars’ comments, which, again, makes it difficult to classify this work in terms of genre.

between modern animal husbandry and the Holocaust. In the same lecture, Costello also challenges the general belief that it is only human beings who possess reason, the belief that separates humans from animals.

In her second lecture, Elizabeth claims that thanks to poetic imagination or “poetic invention” (*The Lives of Animals* 51), humans may be able to comprehend the nature of animals, illustrating her point on poems by Rilke (“The Panther”) and Ted Hughes (“The Jaguar” and “The Second Glance at Jaguar”). “In these poems we know the jaguar not from the way he seems but from the way he moves: The body is as the body moves, or as the currents of life move within it. The poems ask us to imagine our way into that way of moving, to inhabit that body” (*The Lives of Animals* 49). The narration concludes with an organised formal debate following the lecture in which Appleton philosophy professor Seamus O’Hearne attacks Costello’s animal rights notions and labels them Western-culture arrogant. He then criticises the sentimental utopianism of the animal rights movement and the philosophical shortcomings thereof in the demands for equating animal and human understanding.

### **2.3.3 “The Old Woman and the Cats”**

A short story published in 2013 is a later image of Elisabeth Costello’s life. Elizabeth has moved to a deserted Spanish-speaking village where, to her son’s irritation, she lives among a vast number of feral cats. Elizabeth also shares her house with a formerly troublesome Spanish outcast Pablo, who will inherit her property. The short story is narrated by Elizabeth’s son John and consists mainly of the two of them debating the obligations humans have towards animals and humans, the moral influence of contraception, and existence being stripped of choices.

## PRACTICAL PART

### 3 The Role of Animals in the Selected Works

J. M. Coetzee's writings are teeming with different portrayals and images of animals. Three pieces of fiction written by J. M. Coetzee in which the portrayal of animals is the most significant will function as the base for the analytical part of this thesis – the novel *Disgrace* (1999), the novella *The Lives of Animals* (1999) and the short story "The Old Woman and The Cats" (2013). Animals are employed both symbolically and directly in all three fictions and function as a basis for figures of speech. However, the short story "*The Old Woman and the Cats*" shows fewer tropes and is focused mainly on the direct and symbolical depiction of animals, and it will therefore be discussed only in some of the sections of the analytical part.

In the first part of the analysis, both the direct and figurative portrayal of animals as the basis for ethical questions will be discussed. Next, the analysis of the role of animals in Coetzee's language will be given. A brief discussion of the educational character of Coetzee's fiction will be presented. The last part describes how Coetzee employs animals in connection with political aspects and issues in *Disgrace*.

Although occupying significant position in Coetzee's work, animals never appear in the position of a main character. While in *Disgrace* and "The Old Woman and the Cats", animals appear in real situations in which they interact with humans and are present in the lives of the protagonists, animals in *The Lives of Animals* are only spoken of and are depicted in various contexts. Although it is mentioned that Elizabeth Costello, the main character of the novella, keeps cats, she and other characters have no direct contact with real animals throughout the text.

#### 3.1 Animals as an Ethical Instrument

Although he puts himself into the position of an unconcerned observer whose own opinions are not to be presented in his fiction,<sup>16</sup> Coetzee broaches topics that bring moral

<sup>16</sup> For further explanation, see 2.1 *Life and Work*.

questions to the fore. Through the characters of his stories, Coetzee points out ethical issues, although his own stance on them remains unexpressed. The first part of this chapter will focus on the images of animals in connection with the idea of moral improvement. The second part will focus on the portrayal of animals in a state of suffering and its connection with the principle of equal consideration.

### **3.1.1 The Notion of the Sympathetic Imagination**

In *The Lives of Animals*, perhaps the most serious ethical question is pronounced by the main character, Elizabeth Costello, in the first part of the novella where she compares the modern animal husbandry industry to the annihilation of European Jews in the death camps during the Second World War. This comparison is both shocking and disputable and arouses many controversial feelings in Elizabeth's audience and Coetzee's readers.

Coetzee shocks his readers by likening the atrocities of Holocaust that robbed its victims even of the scantiest remnants of human dignity to a seemingly common thing such as killing animals for food and fur. However, this shock is caused not only by the comparison itself, but by the actual similarity or even identity of the aspects of the two phenomena. Elisabeth delivers her core idea at the very beginning of her lecture on animals she is giving at Appleton College. She is convinced about her audience's unawareness of animal well-being:

. . . I have no reason to believe that you have at the forefront of your minds what is being done to animals at this moment in production facilities (I hesitate to call them farms any longer), in abattoirs, in trawlers, in laboratories, all over the world . . . (*The Lives of Animals* 19)

Although uttered by Elizabeth in the novella, these lines were first pronounced by Coetzee himself at Princeton University during his lecture in a series of lectures called "The Tanner Lectures on Human Value", and one may wonder if Elizabeth may be speaking on behalf of her creator, an ambiguity for which Coetzee is often criticised.<sup>1718</sup> Instead of delivering a proper academic speech on a given topic, Coetzee produced a novella (which was

---

<sup>17</sup> Coetzee often imprints autobiographical aspects into his characters. For further explanation, see 2.1 *Life and Work*.

published later), a fact which lays emphasis on the subject of his speech. Moreover, Coetzee's second publication of *The Lives of Animals* within his novel *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) once again stresses the importance of the subject of the two animal chapters.

Elizabeth then presents the events of Holocaust, highlighting the shocking number of those who lost their lives in the death camps, and compares it to the treatment of animals in Western factory farming. The bio-industry, however, is of even a graver nature in Elizabeth's eyes. The fact that animal farming is a never-ending machine full of humiliation and a cycle of death production makes it much worse than the events of the Second World War:

Let me say it openly: 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. (LA 21)

Elizabeth rejects the claims that the two phenomena are not the subject of comparison since the purposes are of different matter inasmuch as the victims of the meat industry, unlike the victims of Holocaust, are not burned and buried but processed "so that they can be consumed in the comfort of our homes" (LA 21). Elizabeth asserts that this notion brings as little comfort as would an excuse from the Holocaust "killers" (LA 21) saying that they had to kill to use the body-fat and hair of the victims.

A striking fact for Elizabeth regarding the Holocaust is the ignorance or indifference of people who looked the other way when the evil was committed: "We point to the Germans and Poles and Ukrainians who did and did not know of the atrocities around them" (LA 35). The reason for refusing to recognise or admit the horrors in the camps might have been, Elizabeth says, a "useful surviving mechanism" (LA 20) for the people

---

18 Paola Splendore expressed her opinion on this subject: "Though occasionally Costello expresses Coetzee's ideas, becoming almost his female 'embodiment', a sort of 'portrait of the artist as an old lady', she in fact represents a dramatization of the author-function, specifically that of a white female writer, from an ex-Commonwealth country, Australia."

living nearby, and although not all of the camps were designed as death factories, “horrors went on in all of them, more horrors by far than one could afford to know, for one’s own sake” (LA 20). Ignorance of the truth was necessary to keep oneself sane.

Costello observes that this ignorance is constant in human relationships with non-human animals. The fact that people turn a blind eye to avoid seeing the mass-slaughter in animal factory farms nowadays may be equalled to the conduct of people with reference to the crimes occurring in the death camps even though they lived in very close proximity to them. She depicts herself going through an ordinary town, seeing no horrors, no factory farms or animal laboratories, yet she is certain they are there: “They are all around us as I speak, only we do not, in a certain sense, know about them” (LA 21). All these places full of animal deaths and suffering are well-concealed from our sights today but that is the result of our aversion to be near it. This aversion started with the movement to towns in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when people became increasingly less accustomed to seeing the deaths of animals as a result of the growing distance between animals and city dwellers. Costello says that Germans involved in the Holocaust (both the Nazis and ordinary people who refused to admit the truth) “lost their humanity”, that they became contaminated with the committed “sin”. She argues: “It was and is inconceivable that people who *did not know* . . . about the camps can be fully human” (LA 21, emphasis in the original), and so their humanity was destroyed by their unwillingness to pay attention.

The word choice chosen by Coetzee for Elizabeth’s description of the Holocaust and the atrocities that were taking place in the death camps is indeed telling. Words such as “murder”, “killers”, “sin” imply that punishment should follow for the actions committed. Those who kill animals for meat and those who eat it should face a penalty for their actions. However, no penalty is offered:

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. We do not feel tainted. We can do anything, it seems, and come away clean. (LA 35)

It seems that no one feels responsibility or guilt, that “we can do anything”, and more importantly “that there is no punishment” (LA 36) for us. We might like to think, asserts Elizabeth, that those who lived near the death camps, some of whom did and some of whom did not know about the killing, would have been haunted by the victims. But according to Costello, the evidence suggests the very opposite – no punishment is imposed on them. The punishment, in Costello’s terms, should involve a feeling of guilt, yet people feel none.

People prefer not to think too deeply about ethical issues that arise from the deeds that are being done to those outside a favoured group and thus avoid moral questions that could disturb them and limit their freedom of choice. During the Second World War, people closed their eyes and hearts for their own sake and so “lost their humanity, in our eyes, because of a certain willed ignorance on their part” (LA 20). But this is not applicable to the things that happen in factory farming nowadays, for the rejection of the truth about animal cruelties is simply comfortable and easier, but definitely unnecessary.

Elizabeth compares the position of animals in human society to the position of Jews during the Second World War, which is an extreme comparison and leads the reader to the general moral issue of the oppression of the disfavoured group by the favoured one. Oppression, exploitation, abuse have been characteristic expressions for the relationship of humans with animals since domestication.<sup>19</sup> And although not expressed openly in the novella, Coetzee might implicitly be making a parallel between animal discrimination (i.e. speciesism) and human discrimination (i.e. racism and sexism) and stimulating the reader (and the audience) to a broader moral consideration. This parallel can be noticed in the language Coetzee uses and will further be analysed.

In her speech, Costello is concerned with the nature of morality and speaks of something which she refers to as “the sympathetic imagination” (LA 35). The sympathetic imagination is a tool for evoking sympathy towards others (Heister 10). Elizabeth describes it as something “that allows us to share at times the being of another” (LA 35). It is therefore a state of mind, a conscious choice of a hospitable attitude and enables us

---

19 For further information, see Chapter 1. *Human-Animal Relationship*.

to experience empathy for others – to feel with and like them. Further, she adds that “[s]ympathy has everything to do with the subject and little to do with the object” (LA 35). It is therefore up to each and every one to make the decision whether to “imagine themselves as someone else” (LA 35), or not.

Costello offers a specific engagement with animals saying that “there are no bounds to the sympathetic imagination” (LA 35), and in her second lecture, “The Poets and the Animals”, she demonstrates the possibility of this form of engagement with the help of the poetry of Ted Hughes and R. M. Rilke. She chooses three poems that depict the moves of wild felines. Through their moves, described poetically, the reader should be able to “inhabit the body” of the cats:

‘By bodying forth the jaguar Hughes shows us that we too can embody animals — by the process called poetic invention that mingles breath and sense in a way that no one has explained and no one ever will. 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 tranquillity, we are for a brief while the jaguar. He ripples within us, he takes over our body, he is us.’ (LA 49)

Elizabeth also presents an example of her imagining herself as the character of her own fictitious novel *The House on Eccles Street*, Marion Bloom. If this is possible to realise with a being that never existed, says Elizabeth, “then I can think my way into the existence of a bat or a chimpanzee or an oyster, any being with whom I share the substrate of life” (LA 35). Costello explains that the lack or, rather, the deliberate refusal of the sympathetic imagination was the worst aspect of the death camps:

The particular horror of the camps, the horror that convinces us that what went on there was a crime against humanity, is not that despite a humanity shared with their victims, the killers treated them like lice. That is too abstract. The horror is that the killers refused to think themselves into the place of their victims, as did everyone else. (LA 34)

Costello in fact claims that we are accountable for our denial of the sympathetic imagination as well as the “not knowing” about the horrors taking place in the death camps and animal factories. The concept that Coetzee here presents is a combination of ignorance with knowledge – denial. With denial, we try not to know the things that we do know (Leist and Singer 123). It is also a choice for which we can be held responsible. Yet it seems that no responsibility is required to be taken. Although the victims were of the same “substrate” as the “killers” in the case of the Holocaust, it did not suffice to stop the killers from performing their tasks.

As Elizabeth constantly makes links between the Holocaust and factory farming (including animal experimentation) and presents them from different perspectives, she implicitly calls on her audience to open their hearts and to allow empathy to work – to make their choice. She, however, does not urge the audience to treat animals more humanely or kill them more humanely, nor does she provide the audience with any solution to the situation. After the first lecture, when asked what she suggests – whether to close factories, stop eating meat, treat and kill animals more humanely, or anything else, Elizabeth simply answers: “If principles are what you want to take away from this talk, I would have to respond, open your heart and listen to what your heart says” (LA 36). She only states the facts as she sees them and let them take effect.

The way Coetzee engages the sympathetic imagination in his fiction enhances the empathetic capabilities of his readers and therefore their moral reflection. Ignorance is not an excuse for us to avoid our responsibility. If we open our hearts and eyes, we should be able to see that the meat industry is an atrocious institution full of unnecessary suffering and that meat-eating practically deconstructs our humanity. This strong polemic which Coetzee offers through his character Costello delineates the difference between a poet and a philosopher. While a standard philosopher presenting animal ethics would engage a calm and unbiased reasoning and would focus on principles, a poet (Coetzee/Costello) dramatizes his ideas and cuts the point with loaded arguments. Coetzee in this sense places a more personal element into animal ethics – he personalises

ethical theory and brings it into our personal lives. He stresses the importance of being a good person – something for which we are indeed responsible.

*The Lives of Animals* is not the only fiction in which Coetzee mentions the Holocaust. In a more implicit way, Coetzee connects human treatment of animals and the Holocaust in his novel *Disgrace*, although the approach is considerably different. Like Elizabeth Costello, David Lurie, the main character, is a social outcast. Later in the story,<sup>20</sup> he helps Bev Shaw at the animal clinic to get rid of unwanted, often crippled animals, stray dogs for the most part that are simply too many. People bring animals to the clinic to make them “disappear”, to “dispose of” them, “dispatch” them “to oblivion” (all *Disgrace* 142), although they never specifically say “I have brought you this dog to kill” (*Disgrace* 142). Coetzee explains that “what is being asked for is, in fact, Lösung (German always to hand with an appropriately blank abstraction): sublimation, as alcohol is sublimated from water, leaving no residue, no aftertaste” (*Disgrace* 142). Lösung is a German word for “solution”, with a Nazi connotation; in the form of *Endlösung* it was used to label “the final solution”, the definite answer to the “Jewish Question” (Browning 11). The context in *Disgrace* is not as radical as in *The Lives of Animals*, as Coetzee does not intend to shock his readers by this comparison in the first place. Nevertheless, by using a German word with such a strong connotation Coetzee must surely be prodding us to consider the connection. The need to dispose of animals and finding a solution to the problem (*Lösung*), with no moral residue, no guilt, as an act of denial of the truth about animal suffering entailed by our responsibility for animals, is clearly presented by Coetzee as an ethical failure. The dogs (and other animals) in *Disgrace* that find their ends in the clinic are indeed unwanted in the world, and useless to all. They need to be eliminated, although unlike in the *Endlösung* that stripped human beings of their dignity, the dogs and other animals that endure Lösung in *Disgrace* are cared for by the loving and comforting Bev. When David first comes to the clinic to help Bev care for the dogs, he is repulsed by a dog licking his hand – he feels shame for what is about to be done to it. He lets the dog lick it nevertheless, despite hating the licking. By the end of the book, however, David starts to understand his work of animal euthanasia differently – not just as disposing of the

---

20 For the synopsis of the novel's plot, see 3.1.1 *Disgrace*.

redundant dogs but more as an act of empathy. He has learnt from Bev “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” (*Disgrace* 219). As he becomes more emotionally involved, David even takes on the task of taking the dog bodies to the incinerator and refuses to leave them among other waste until the next day when the workers come to burn it all together: “He is not prepared to inflict such dishonour upon them” (*Disgrace* 144). When David finds out how the workers use their shovels to crush the bags of bodies into a more fitting shape, he insists on putting the dead dogs into the incinerator himself:

“Why has he taken on this job? To lighten the burden on Bev Shaw? For that it would be enough to drop off the bags at the dump and drive away. For the sake of the dogs? But the dogs are dead; and what do dogs know of honour and dishonour anyway. For himself, then. For his idea of the world, a world in which men do not use shovels to beat corpses into a more convenient shape for processing.” (*Disgrace* 145-146)

The compassion David feels for the dogs opens the gates for his sympathetic imagination. He employs this newly-acquired ability also with Lucy when he thinks of her rape and the possible feelings of the rapists: “He can, if he concentrates, if he loses himself, be there, be the men, inhabit them, fill them with the ghost of himself. The question is, does he have it in him to be the woman” (*Disgrace* 160)? To imagine himself in the position of another being – human or non-human, he has to “lose himself”, lose what it entails to be a human.

The result of his transformation can be seen in the closing pages of the novel, when David allows himself to imagine himself in the being of a dog that is about to be brought into the room from which it will never “come out again” (*Disgrace* 219): “Something happens in this room, something unmentionable: here the soul is yanked out of the body” (*Disgrace* 219). He imagines carrying Driepoot, an abandoned crippled dog for which he had developed a certain affection, into this special room, that David will probably need to help him, bear him in his arms “like a lamb” (*Disgrace* 219), and how he, David, would “caress him and brush back the fur so that the needle can find the vein, and whisper to him and

support him in the moment when, bewilderingly, his legs buckle” (*Disgrace* 219). David’s awakened sympathetic imagination allows him not to “save” the dog for another week, as Bev would expect, and he is ready to “give the dog up”. This act can be read as an act of a sacrifice – even David’s word choice suggest a similarity to a lamb (along with sheep and other cattle) that was used for sacrifice to cleanse the owner and his family of sins. With the sacrifice of Driepoot, David gives up his belief that humans are superior to animals – his belief as to what being human really is (Tremaine 160).

What is important is this transformation of David: Starting with a largely unsympathetic attitude, David learns to engage with others empathetically through his encounters with animals, although there were other aspects which contributed to David’s change, such as Lucy’s rape, which will later be analysed from a different perspective. Lucy once said to him: ““You should try to be a good person too”” to which David thinks “A good person. Not a bad resolution to make, in dark times” (*Disgrace* 216). And indeed, David has become a good person, as if he were fulfilling Costello’s (and Coetzee’s) message from *The Lives of Animals*.

The notion of the sympathetic imagination can also be found in Coetzee’s short story “The Old Woman and the Cats”. Elizabeth explains to her son why she made a decision to look after feral cats in the small village of San Juan and describes a situation when she saw a cat giving birth in a culvert. The cats of the village would usually “slip away if they so much as caught a whiff in the air a human being coming” (“The Old Woman and the Cats” 22) since the villagers usually shoot or beat the cats. Elizabeth, seeing this mother cat bearing her children in a damp, filthy place, “yet ready to give her life to defend them” (“OW” 22), made a decision based on her own experience of being a mother. “*I too am a mother,*” (“OW” 22, emphasis in the original) Elizabeth wanted to tell the cat. The connection through experiencing motherhood helped Elizabeth imagine herself into the being of the mother-cat and she decided that she does not “want to live in a world in which a man wearing boots will take advantage of the fact that you are in labour, helpless, unable to escape, to kick you to death” (“OW” 23) and started to look after the cats. In broader terms, Elizabeth is saying that we should not tolerate abuse, cruelty or the oppression of

those who cannot defend themselves only because there is the opportunity to do so. At this point, a parallel can be made also with human lives, women's in particular, and Coetzee may be attempting to refer to the reality of oppression and abuse of women, as well as other oppressed groups of humans.

### **3.1.2 Animal Suffering and the Principle of Equal Consideration of Interests**

The image of suffering frequently appears in Coetzee's writings – suffering of both humans and animals. For a long time, however, animals were generally considered as being impervious to pain, and scientists such as Descartes performed painful experiments on them. Later, the notion of animals as sentient beings that are able to feel and therefore suffer became a subject of debate, laying the foundations of animal protection and, later, the Animal Rights Movement.<sup>21</sup> The physical suffering of animals in Coetzee's fiction very often duplicates the suffering of his literary characters – both figuratively and literally. Through physical and psychological suffering, Coetzee's protagonists often improve their characters, becoming more empathetic, as can be seen in *Disgrace*, for example. As the images of the suffering of any living creature automatically evoke empathy, Coetzee might be using this tool to influence his readers' moral consciousness. The next section of the thesis will explore the portrayal of animal (and human) suffering in connection with the notion of equal consideration of interests.

In *The Lives of Animals*, Elizabeth Costello speaks of the animal suffering in factory farming and how we refuse to acknowledge this fact. To illustrate the appalling conditions in which animals live and die in animal husbandry, Elizabeth compares it to the atrocities that were committed during the Holocaust. Her view on the problem of the ethical treatment of animals in factory farming is clear – although the parallel between animal farms and the Holocaust may seem somewhat too crude. Yet this form might be effective, provided that the point was at least to make the audience and the readers consider the problem of the ethical treatment of factory animals; needless to say, *The Lives of Animals* met with a considerable amount of commentary and reaction (Leist and Singer 172). Nevertheless, a

---

21 For further explanation, see Chapter 1. *The Human-Animal Relationship*.

parallel or comparison does not necessarily amount to an equation, as Peter Singer remarks in his commentary in the “*Reflections*” section of *The Lives of Animals* (LA 86).

Costello’s notions about the treatment of animals in the bio-industry are reminiscent of Judith Butler’s conception of *derealization*. In her article “The Precarious Lives of Animals”, Chloë Taylor comments on *The Lives of Animals* and brings out Butler’s idea of derealization of lives and deaths. According to Butler, committing violence on those whose lives we derealize or never allow to be real for us to begin with is easier (Taylor 63). To derealize lives, according to Butler, means not to regard these lives as lives at all, or not to count certain group of human beings as humans (Butler 34-36). One way of derealizing someone’s life is by refusing to see them as individuals – to give them names, faces, and biographies. This is exactly what took place in the death camps during the Second World War. German Nazis did everything to derealize Jews (and other disenfranchised peoples’) lives – Jews were dispossessed, separated from their families, their names were removed, to be replaced by a number in the form of a tattoo on their forearms and their hair was shaven so that all of them resembled one another. The resemblance of the living conditions in the death camps and the lives of animals in factory farms is astonishing – the young are removed from their parents, animals are given a tag with a code or a brand, their tails are cut, their beaks blunted. Moreover, the propaganda surrounding both is remarkably similar – while the life in the camps was presented by media as full of amusement, soccer matches, child games and music (USHMM 2017), animals are depicted as happy, frisky creatures that run up and down the hills while the sun is shining. To leave nothing to ambiguity, Elizabeth reminds us that people in the camps “went like sheep to the slaughter”, that “[t]hey died like animals” and that “[t]he Nazi butchers killed them” (LA 20). Even the use of the word “cattle-cars” (LA 34) that was used for the transformation of people implies something inhumane in their treatment. Coetzee makes his readers consider this connection – if we find what was happening in the death camps shocking, why should we ignore the suffering of animals in abattoirs and animal experimentation? Is human life more valuable than animal life?

Costello argues that the notion of humans being of a higher value than animals stems from the idea that unlike animals, humans can reason and therefore exploit those who cannot. Elizabeth rejects this concept and argues that “reason looks to [her] suspiciously like the being of human thought; worse than that, like the being of one tendency in human thought” (LA 23). Furthermore, she explains that “reason may not be the being of the universe but on the contrary merely the being of the human brain” (LA 23). If reason is something that was created by humans, then animals clearly do not possess it.

The point Elizabeth tries to make is that humans should equally consider the interests of any creature or a group of living creatures, as defined by Peter Singer in his ethical theory in *Animal Liberation*, for example. Elizabeth tries to promote equal consideration of interests with her arguments against speciesism (although she never uses this term herself) and explains the groundlessness of the idea of human supremacy. Thanks to her comparison of the oppression of a specific group of humans with the oppression of non-human beings, Elizabeth also rails against racism and sexism in broader terms. If the oppression of Jews during the Holocaust can be compared to the cruelty committed on animals in the bio-industry, which Elizabeth proves possible, the cruelty and injustice committed by a group of humans to other disfavoured groups of humans, such as black people or women, should be considered equally heinous. Elizabeth in fact states that the oppression or even exploitation of any group of people is as baseless as the assertion that only humans possess reason. Further, if the possession of reason is the measure for exploiting or not exploiting other living creatures, then the oppression of women and black people who do possess reason is grossly illogical, arbitrary and buck-passing. The connection between some of the aspects of each ideology will be further analysed.

Throughout *Disgrace*, animals suffer a great deal along with humans. Shortly after his arrival at Lucy’s farm, David falls asleep in the cage of an old dog Katy when he probably tries to cheer her up tickling her behind the ears, saying ““Abandoned, are we”” (*Disgrace* 78)? He probably senses some sadness in her and Lucy then explains: ““Poor old Katy, she’s mourning. No one wants her, and she knows it”” (*Disgrace* 78). Lucy goes on to explain that Katy is probably missed by her numerous offspring but they cannot “invite

her” to their homes since they “are part of the furniture, part of an alarm system” (*Disgrace* 78). David feels that this is right, that animals are here to be useful and not to be sad about their lives: ““The Church Fathers had a long debate about them, and decided they don’t have proper souls”” (*Disgrace* 79), therefore mourning is not really possible. He also expresses his opinion about animal welfare people who to him “are a bit like Christians of a 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” (*Disgrace* 73). David does not have a favourable perception of people who work in animal welfare – yet ironically, he himself enters this institution shortly after this comment when he starts working with Bev at an animal clinic under the Animal Welfare League, and through his ironical comment about raping and pillaging it is obvious that he does not realise the full horrors of reality that come with the term “rape” yet. David’s connection of “raping and pillaging” with “kick[ing] a cat” (*Disgrace* 73) in the same breath shows his perception of his own position in the society as being superior both to women and animals, seeing women as something to be used for releasing stress and animals as something to be cruel to. This conception of his world is set to change later in the story with the rape of Lucy, however, and the absolute significance of the word *rape* catches him unprepared for all the terror that is connected with it.

In this stage, however, David holds an anthropocentric view of the world<sup>22</sup> and thinks of animals as something to be used, something inferior – when Petrus brings two sheep to be slaughtered for a party, David thinks that the fact that they are “destined since birth for the butcher’s knife” (*Disgrace* 123) is not to be questioned or challenged: “Sheep do not own themselves, do not own their lives. They exist to be used . . .” (*Disgrace* 123). However, as he sees them tethered on a “bare patch of ground” (*Disgrace* 122), David even contemplates buying them from Petrus – buying them “out of slavery”, to quit their suffering. Although he does not know how and why, he starts to feel a certain bond between himself and the sheep, and later also a certain form of compassion with other animals. One day, when he is driving home from the clinic where Bev euthanizes stray dogs, David has to pull over and bursts into tears: “He does not understand what is

---

22 For further explanation, see 1.3.2 *Anthropocentrism – Christianity*.

happening to him. Until now he has been more or less indifferent to animals” (*Disgrace* 143). Suddenly, he is convinced that the dogs can “smell what is going on inside” (*Disgrace* 143) the room at the clinic where Bev injects animals with the deadly substance, and that “the dogs know their time has come” (*Disgrace* 143). With this changed attitude toward the dogs (and other animals), he is takes care of their dead bodies after watching how the dogs face “the disgrace of dying” (*Disgrace* 143) and loads them into the incinerator himself, not comfortable with the idea of mixing the dogs’ dead bodies and hospital waste as “he is not prepared to inflict such dishonour upon [the dogs]” (*Disgrace* 144). This might seem as a curious decision, since a dead dog can hardly distinguish between honour and dishonour. Moreover, honour has traditionally been associated with human beings – but here, Coetzee associates it as a moral value not only with animals, but also with dead animals. Such a perspective signalizes the development of the protagonist’s moral awareness and Coetzee shows readers how a purely anthropocentric attitude towards animals can be changed into the principle of equal consideration. David’s change can also be seen in the use of language Coetzee employs in connection with David regarding animals – in the first part of the novel, animals appear almost exclusively to enhance the language that is connected often with David’s “enriching” (*Disgrace* 57) hobby of hunting women, whereas towards the end animals occupy a real place in David’s life.

The notion of animal suffering also appears in Coetzee’s short story “The Old Woman and the Cats”, albeit not as explicitly as in the two other fictions.<sup>23</sup> Elizabeth, the main character, explains to her son why she took up the job of looking after feral cats and therefore became an outcast in the village. She tells John the cats’ story that generations ago they were loved and nurtured by their owners from the village. The owners, however, started to move to the cities and abandoned the cats. Once, cats belonged to favoured circles – they were fed and caressed. After the relocation of their masters they gradually fell into disgrace among the villagers as they were forced to go feral by the circumstances. Villagers began to hate them as, under no control, the wild cats over-multiplied. Nowadays, the inhabitants of the village frequently shoot them, drown them or just hurt

---

23 For the synopsis of the story, see 2.1.3. “The Old Woman and the Cats”.

them. Elizabeth somehow shares this state of uprootedness with the cats as the villagers disapprove of her behaviour regarding the cats. Elizabeth also tends to a mentally disturbed man, Pablo, whose family has abandoned him due to his difficult behaviour. His family wanted him to be taken by social welfare, but Elizabeth took him under her wing instead and wants him to take over her job of looking after the cats after she dies. The three entities create together a little world for themselves where the wounded by society are nurtured and healed by “Good Queen Elizabeth” (“OW” 27).

Elizabeth describes to John her encounter with the cat that was giving birth in a culvert, snarling at Elizabeth to frighten her off, and tells him that she does not approve of a “world in which [her] children or any other mother’s children will be torn away from her and drowned because someone has decided they are too many” (“OW” 23). The image of a suffering and mourning mother, be it human or animal, causes Elizabeth great distress. However, Elizabeth is not prepared to serve as a “shining example” (“OW” 21) to others and to solve the problem of the prolific feral cats when John suggests that she could have the cats neutered to stop their suffering. ““Let other people be examples. I follow where my soul tells me. I always have”” (“OW” 21), says Elizabeth and ends the discussion. Her attitude towards the problem may reflect the attitude of the author himself to moral and political issues that has been described throughout the thesis several times. Like Elizabeth in “The Old Woman and the Cats”, Coetzee himself does not wish to serve as an example to others and initiate any radical action – the manner in which he wishes to fight with the issues he tackles is to incorporate them into his fiction and thus provoke his readers’ concern.

At one point, Elizabeth states that she would be willing to “turn [her] back on [her] own tribe – the tribe of the hunters – and side with the tribe of the hunted. No matter what the cost” (“OW” 22), unlike John, who thinks to himself that if he had to make a choice between the interests of humans and the interests of animals, he would choose for humans without hesitation. With this statement, John probably reflects the opinion of the majority, one that corresponds with the ideology of speciesism. Further, regarding the problem of the village and its plague of cats: if it were up to John alone and his mother

were not involved, or even deceased, he contemplates that “he would say Kill them all, he would say Exterminate the brutes. Feral cats, feral dogs: the world does not need any more of them” (“OW” 21). Both Elizabeth and John have entrenched perspectives on the problem of cats – she would practically rather become a cat than anything else, and he would dispose of all the cats near the village. Even though Elizabeth knows that neutering the cats would probably be helpful, just as John thinks that their extirpation would probably solve the problem of the village, they do not proceed to the action. John does not want to hurt his mother’s feelings and Elizabeth simply follows her heart.

### **3.2 Animals as the Basis for Figures of Speech**

In his writing, Coetzee employs figures of speech connected with animals, mainly similes and metaphors, to make his stories more vivid and also as an aid to effective comparison between or portrayal of the lives of animals and those of humans. The next section will focus on the examples of figures of speech in Coetzee’s selected works.

In *The lives of Animals*, Coetzee mainly employs similes, although perhaps the most important likening happens in the form of analogy, when Elizabeth compares animal treatment in slaughterhouses to the treatment of human beings during the Holocaust.<sup>24</sup> Almost all of the animal similes appear in a negative sense, often in connection with suffering, hatred, embarrassment, or to evoke an unpleasant image. For example, to highlight the subordinate position of those who lack power, Elizabeth in her first lecture uses this device to elucidate to readers the treatment of Jews in the death camps: “The crime of the Third Reich, says the voice of accusation, was to treat people like animals” (LA 20). Later, Elizabeth places further stress on the attitude of the killers in the camps and their aversion towards their victims whom they considered as abhorrent as vermin, for they “treated them like lice” (LA 34). Elizabeth compares the killing process in the death camps to the process taking place in the slaughterhouses with the aid of a chain of tropes – first she employs two similes: “‘They went like sheep to the slaughter.’ ‘They died like animals.’” (LA 20) and then uses a metaphor to emphasise how bloody the job of the executors must have been: “‘The Nazi butchers killed them’” (LA 20). Elizabeth does not

---

24 For further analyses of the comparison, see 3.1. *Animals as an Ethical Instrument*.

try to stress the horror of the end of the victims' lives – nowadays, everyone is aware of the atrocities that occurred there. On the contrary, by using such language Elizabeth wants to justify her rightness in comparing animal factories with the Holocaust.

Animal tropes are also used to refer to the behaviour of the participants of the Holocaust:

In our chosen metaphors, it was they and not their victims who were the beasts. By treating fellow human beings, beings created in the image of God, like beasts, they had themselves become beasts. (LA 21)

The image of God is at the top of hierarchy and human being is placed under Him – to behave and to become a beast means to be something that is not human, and therefore *less* than human.

Later, another animal simile is employed when Elizabeth, talking to her son John, observes that “[p]eople complain that we treat animals like objects, but in fact we treat them like prisoners of war” (LA 57). She explains that first zoos had to protect animals in cages against attacks by the visitors because the spectators felt that “the animals were there to be insulted and abused, like prisoners in a triumph” (LA 57). Once, animals were a threat to people who had to fight with them to survive. After domestication and the invention of guns, says Elizabeth, this “war” (LA 57) ended with humans as the winner, and the defeated animals became their “prisoners” (LA 57). John argues that “generally one doesn’t kill prisoners of war. One turns them into slaves” (LA 58) to which Elizabeth replies using metaphors:

Well, that’s what our captive herds are: slave populations. Their work is to breed for us. Even their sex becomes a form of labour. We don’t hate them because they are not worth hating anymore. We regard them as you say, with contempt. (LA 58)

Elizabeth draws attention to the supremacy of humans over animals using expressions like “captive”, “slave”, “slave populations” and “contempt” (all LA 58) and illustrates the human-animal relationship in the form of subjugation. In the same way as it is analysed in the subchapter “The Notion of Sympathetic Imagination”, Elizabeth again underlines the

notion of oppression and abuse. Furthermore, the language Elizabeth uses (slave, work, labour) is not predominantly linked with animals but with humans, and subjugated humans in particular.

In *Disgrace*, animal figures of speech are employed from the very beginning of the novel. There is, however, a significant shift in Coetzee's use of animal language. While in the beginning, animals appear solely in the form of metaphors or similes, after David moves to the country, closer to animals, the attitude in language changes as animals become real in his life. Animal metaphors and similes, however, can be found throughout the whole novel. As in *The Lives of Animals*, animals in *Disgrace* often appear in problematic situations – either depicted as powerless or, on the contrary, being superior, suffering or being in danger, and they often appear as tropes of violence in the character's consciousness.

In the first part of the story, Coetzee uses animal tropes for the depiction of David's sexual life. For instance, a metaphor is used when Soraya ends her appointments with David and he still tries to contact her (hiring a private detective to track her whereabouts). Soraya demands he never contacts her again and David understands that: "But then, what should a predator expect when he intrudes into the vixen's nest, into the home of her cubs" (*Disgrace* 10)? David, being a metaphorical predator, meets another predator, a vixen, and since no prey is available, David is forced to retreat.

Another example of an animal simile in the predatory and sexual context is when David makes love to his student, Melanie: "Not rape, not quite like 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" (*Disgrace* 26). One more predatory metaphor can be found later in the story after David is accused of abusing Melanie when he faces the committee of inquiry. David describes the reaction of one of the members of the committee as follows: "What does she see, when she looks at him, that keeps her at such a pitch of anger? A shark among the helpless little fishies" (*Disgrace* 53)? David places himself in the position of a predator that moves among his prey that comprises of Melanie and other (female) students. David himself seems to

perceive Melanie as defenceless prey as he refers to her as a “poor little bird” (*Disgrace* 32) or “my little dove” (*Disgrace* 34, emphasis in the original). Even Melanie’s father uses a predatory metaphor when he discovers the truth about Melanie’s abuse: “If we can’t trust the university, who can we trust? We never thought we were sending our daughter into a nest of vipers” (*Disgrace* 38). David, however, also appears on the other end of the scale when he is leaving the committee hearing – students and reporters surround him and suddenly the roles are reversed as he finds himself in the position of prey – not hunting any more, but hunted: “They circle around him like hunters who have cornered a strange beast and do not know how to finish it off” (*Disgrace* 56). David’s world seems to comprise of two kinds of people only – the aggressive, powerful predators, and the silent, meek prey.

Regarding David’s sexual desires, which he believes to be similar to that of animals, dogs in particular, he does not like the idea of suppressing them, even though he contemplates the eventuality of “giv[ing] up, retir[ing] from the game” (*Disgrace* 9). The term “game” in this sense is representative of both play and prey. A possible solution that comes to David’s mind could be castration, which is often used for animals: “Might one approach a doctor and ask for it? A simple enough operation, surely: they do it to animals every day, and animals survive well enough, if one ignores a certain residue of sadness” (*Disgrace* 9). Later, when David tries to explain to Lucy what happened at the university, stating that his “case rests on the rights of desire” (*Disgrace* 89), he uses a story from the past, of their neighbour’s dog who was punished every time he would get excited as a bitch passed by:

One can punish a dog, it seems to me, for an offence like chewing a slipper. A dog will accept the justice of that: a beating for a chewing. But desire is another story. No animal will accept the justice of being punished for following its instincts. (*Disgrace* 90)

In front of the committee of inquiry, David confesses that he merely “became a servant of Eros” (*Disgrace* 52), that he could not resist an impulse, a desire, an instinct. And although he himself considers animals as something lower than humans, he compares his sexual desires to that of the dog’s and refuses to apologise since instincts are not to be

suppressed. What does not come to his mind nonetheless is the possibility of moral restraint, and he seeks solutions similar to those that are used on animals. An echo of David's former thought about castration comes later in the story, when Lucy and David are attacked at the farm and he is locked in the lavatory – figuratively castrated, David is unable to protect either Lucy or the dogs.

In Lucy's life, animal metaphors and similes play a significant role, a simile concerning the life of a dog in particular. At the beginning of Lucy's story, when David arrives at the farm and everything is (almost) perfect in her life, having big plans with her business, they talk about the life that they "share with the animals" and Lucy emphasises the importance of sharing "some of our privileges with the beasts" (*Disgrace* 74). She stresses that she does not "want to come back in another existence as a dog or a pig and have to live as dogs or pigs under us" (*Disgrace* 74). However, as the story proceeds, Lucy is raped by three black men, on which she comments: "They spur each other on. That's probably why they do it together. Like dogs in a pack" (*Disgrace* 159). Lucy's humiliation culminates when she discovers she is pregnant and, realising that this pack is likely to attack her again, has to accept her former dog-man Petrus' offer of marriage, for she has become too vulnerable, too easy prey: "Otherwise, [Petrus] wants to remind me, I am without protection, I am fair game" (*Disgrace* 203). Ironically, she accepts her fate to live "like a dog" (*Disgrace* 205). She is debased to the level of a defenceless animal as she becomes Petrus' property and to her father's question about her situation she answers:

'Yes, I agree, it is humiliating. But perhaps that is a good point to start from again. Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept. To start at ground level. With nothing. Not with nothing but. With nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity.'

'Like a dog.'

'Yes, like a dog.' (*Disgrace* 205)

The power abuse is here depicted in the most explicit way and cumulated into one image of not only racism, but also sexism, and by extension via language devices also speciesism.

Throughout the novel, Coetzee also employs animal similes as an apt description of a situation, four of which will be presented. Such similes make the text more vivid and stimulate the reader's imagination. When David removes Melanie's clothes at her flat, just before their intercourse (undesired on Melanie's side), a naked Melanie slips under the bedspread "like a mole burrowing" (*Disgrace* 25) and Coetzee's words suggest her wish to hide, to be hidden, to escape the predator and the act that is about to take place. Another example is given after the attack at the farm when Coetzee describes David's feelings of despair and tiredness as he feels that life is leaving his body, and that at the end he will be "like a fly-casing in a spiderweb, brittle to the touch, lighter than rice-chaff, ready to float away" (*Disgrace* 107). To describe how hollow he will be, he relates himself to the mere residue of a non-human animal, of no value whatsoever. Another simile occurs when David uncovers the bandage on his burnt ear – he thinks it looks revolting, "like a naked pink mollusc" (*Disgrace* 120) and contemplates if he will ever be bold enough to show it to others. Here, David feels that his mollusc-like appearance renders him a 'creature' unsuited for human society, suggesting his newly-found capacity for relating to non-human animals. In the last example, David and Bev are talking about the relationship between Lucy and David. He feels there is a gulf between him and Lucy that broadens yet further when one of the intruder-attackers, Pollux, moves in with Petrus as he is his relative. Lucy cannot handle the two being in one place and David comments that "[they] become too many. Too many in too small a space. Like spiders in a bottle" (*Disgrace* 209). Image of animals squeezed in an enclosed space, unable to escape is an image that is disheartening enough. But Coetzee pushes it forward and uses spiders for his example, which also gives rise to a feeling of repugnance and dread, possibly echoing Lucy's feelings.

Many examples of figures of speech can be found both in the novella *The Lives of Animals* and the novel *Disgrace*. In connection with animals, Coetzee employs mainly metaphors and similes. The significant fact is that the figures of speech are almost always employed in a negative or unpleasant situation or context. Nevertheless, the resulting language is very rich and aptly conveys Coetzee's characters' preoccupations, feelings, and anxieties.

Although Coetzee's short story "The Old Woman and the Cats" does not present any animal tropes, an interesting moment appears in the story regarding Coetzee's lexis. John suggests to his mother that she should compose a legal trust so that Pablo would be obliged to take care of the homeless cats, to which Elizabeth responds: "'Take care of... Be careful, John. In some circles *take care of* means *dispose of*, means *put down*, means *give a humane death*'" ("OW" 27, emphasis in the original). Elizabeth's remark echoes both the events in *Disgrace*, in which stray dogs are "disposed of" and given a "humane death" by caring Bev, as well as the issues regarding factory farming Elizabeth speaks of in *The Lives of Animals* where countless numbers of animals endure an inhumane death each and every day.

### 3.3 The Educational Dimension of the Representation of Animals

Albeit in a broader way, there is another role of animals in Coetzee's work, particularly in *The Lives of Animals*, and that is the didactic aspect of the works. As the title itself suggests, the writing is concerned with the lives of animals. Such a title would anticipate an educational book, however, not fiction. The two parts that are named *Lectures*, in *The Lives of Animals*, or *Lessons*, as Coetzee calls them in *Elizabeth Costello*, indicate the same.

In both parts, "The Philosophers and the Animals" and "The Poets and the Animals" Coetzee employs a large amount of reference – be it to philosophers (Aristotle, Socrates, Descartes, Aquinas, Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, Mary Midgley, Tom Regan, etc.), authors or poets (Franz Kafka, Jonathan Swift, Ernest Hemingway, Tom Nagel, Ted Hughes, Rainer Maria Rilke, etc.) or scientists (Wolfgang Köhler).<sup>25</sup> These authors and scholars are always placed in the text in connection with animal issues, be it the question of their soul and reason, particular conceptions of animals and their position alongside humans, the ethical status of animals, or real examples of historical facts or poems. Coetzee, however, rarely explains this connection, notably in the case of the philosophers. He usually exposes only a fragment of the problem, or not at all, gives only the name of the author, and leaves the reader with that. By displaying only a part of the whole, Coetzee enhances

---

25 Some of the philosophical concepts of the human-animal relationship are presented in 1. *The Human-Animal Relationship*.

the readers' curiosity and in a sense forces them to discover the references and educate themselves.

Another form of inserting an educational dimension to his fiction is by stating the actual facts. This model can be seen in *The Lives of Animals* as well as in *Disgrace*, although only limitedly in the latter. In the second lecture of *The Lives*, for example, Elizabeth talks about the actual history of the development of the human-animal relationship, about the history of animal rights, or about pet-keeping:

'Pet-keeping, for instance, is by no means a Western fad: the first travellers to South America encountered settlements where human beings and animals lived higgledy-piggledy together.' (LA 60)

In *Disgrace* it is mainly through depicting the image of post-apartheid South Africa openly that Coetzee educates his readers. For example, the portrayal of dogs as "a part of alarm system" (*Disgrace* 78) because they "are bred to snarl at the mere smell of a black man" (*Disgrace* 110) points at the problems of racism in the country. The objectivity of Coetzee's presentation of post-apartheid South Africa, however, could be a subject of debate.<sup>26</sup>

This approach of educating the readers is not unusual in fiction; for example, the history of Western philosophy was described in *Sophie's World* by Jostein Gaarder, or many scientific methods and phenomena have been depicted in the novels of Simon Mawer. However, Coetzee does not educate his readers with historical or academic facts only. More importantly, thanks to the form of his delivery (that is, the form of a novella or a novel that is not deliberately educational non-fiction), Coetzee allows readers to relate to the presented principles and, at best, to incorporate them into their own lives.

### **3.4 Animals as a Political Instrument**

Regarding his political views, Coetzee holds the same attitude as with his ethical conception of animal well-being, and does not want to present his own stance on the issues. Political topics nevertheless emerge in his work. One of the most delicate themes

---

<sup>26</sup> For further explanation see Chapter 3. *J. M. Coetzee*.

is the post-apartheid situation in South Africa portrayed in *Disgrace*. Many authors and philosophers criticised this novel for being racist and full of clichés about South Africa. With the aid of animal imagery, Coetzee portrays the dreary consequences of the apartheid era.

South-Africa, being a post-colonial country, has long suffered from power abuse. Power in different forms was used to dominate colonised peoples and non-human animals. In *Disgrace*, Coetzee demonstrates that the treatment of other human beings as animals or “beasts” (56) is a consequence of a Western history in which less valuable humans were associated with animality.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, according to Olson, the post-apartheid violence against women and non-human animals stems from the violence of colonialism and apartheid against people that were considered racially inferior (Olson 119). Coetzee commented on the situation in his essay *Giving Offence: Essays on Censorship* as follows:

In pursuing the causes of the quite egregious incidence of sexual violence against women in South Africa, for instance, one must surely start with the trauma of colonial conquest, which fractured the social and customary basis of legality, yet allowed some of the worst features of patriarchy to survive, including the treatment of unattached women as fair game, huntable creatures. (*Giving Offence* 81-82)

In this context, Lucy’s rape represents a pivotal event in *Disgrace* and will be further analysed, with the help of Greta Olsen’s text “Like a Dog”, as an example of Coetzee’s employment of animals in his political engagement.

It is through the image of a dog that Coetzee depicts the extreme power imbalances of apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa and its racist and sexist stereotypes. After the rape of Lucy, David thinks about the role of dogs in apartheid South Africa as they were, and apparently still are, as David’s use of present tense suggests, trained for the explicit purpose of deterring black people: “a country where dogs are bred to snarl at the mere smell of a black man” (*Disgrace* 110). In Olson, it is explained that dogs in South Africa have functioned as protectors of the propertied classes, generally the white population

---

<sup>27</sup> For further information, see Chapter 1. *The Human-Animal Relationship*.

(Olson 124). This weapon of the oppressors was instrumentalized by humans to degrade and also torture other, less-valuable, victimised humans. Lucy's watchdogs in the farm, however, are killed by the attackers so that the deed can be done. Although Olsen remarks that Lucy's rape could *only* occur because the dogs have been killed, it is Lucy herself who releases two Dobermanns into the pen prior to the rape and shuts it, two watchdogs she has had on a leash up until now. This act may be seen as an act of trust in the new South Africa, although David thinks to himself: "A brave gesture, . . . but is it wise" (*Disgrace* 92)? After the attack, David contemplates the attacker's pleasure in killing the watchdogs, destroying the former symbol of oppression, enjoying their revenge on the animals, the tool of subjugation:

Like shooting fish in a barrel, he thinks. Contemptible, yet exhilarating, probably, in a country where dogs are bred to snarl at the mere smell of a black man. A satisfying afternoon's work, heady, like all revenge. (*Disgrace* 110)

David imagines how Lucy felt during the attack, terrified nearly to death, and what the intruders said to her: "Call your dogs! they said to her. Go on, call your dogs! No dogs? Then let us show you dogs!" (*Disgrace* 160). David realises that the rapists must have been victimised by the violent system of apartheid, in which dogs represented the power of whites. By killing the dogs, they destroy the history of white oppression, and David is now able to understand their ferocity. David's imaginings of Lucy's rape now correlate with the scene of the rape of Melanie, and Coetzee's animal imagery (Melanie being "like a rabbit when the jaws of the fox close on its neck" (*Disgrace* 21)) suggests that "in the postcolonial context women are treated as game" (Olson 126). This equals the principles of all the three ideologies that exploit "the others" through power – racism, sexism and speciesism.

With the help of animal imagery, Coetzee offers a depiction of the present political situation of South Africa<sup>28</sup>. The depiction, however, is a dismal one as, it seems, the past world order of subjugated groups of human and non-human beings that are treated and

---

28 The novel was published in 1999, only 5 years after the end of apartheid.

considered to be mere prey or property, is not, at least for the present, going to change with the establishment of a new world order. People will still keep watchdogs for their protection and turn their properties into “fortress[es]” (*Disgrace* 113).

With this depiction of the new South Africa as a dangerous place where the angry post-apartheid black man will strip the white of his weapons, his property, his rights, his dignity, Coetzee was accused of exploiting racist stereotypes by African National Congress. Yet a political prevarication unfolds, particularly in the case of Lucy’s decision to keep the baby following her rape. With the focus given on the supposed racism, the ANC tries to divert attention from a long-running, thorny problem of woman abuse in South Africa, a problem which it has long neglected (Jolly 166). Furthermore, Lucy’s decision may be viewed as a step forward, a given hand, for although she agrees that “it is humiliating” from her point of view, keeping the baby is perhaps “a good point to start from again. Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept. To start at ground level. With nothing . . . No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity.” (*Disgrace* 205) Mike Nicol, a novelist, also comments positively on Lucy’s act (and Coetzee’s offer), emphasising that “if this does not represent a pragmatic, if sentimental, attempt at reconciliation, I [Nicol] don’t know what does” (Jolly 149).

## 4 Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the role of animals that are portrayed and referred to in Coetzee's three pieces of fiction. The analysis of his literary works reveals that, apart from the animal imagery that functions as a language enhancement that makes the overall bleak atmosphere of the works more vivid and imaginative, Coetzee also prompts his readers to search for more information about the authors and principles he refers to in his fiction, e.g. mentioning Mary Midgley's name in *The Lives of Animals* with no other explanation (Mary Midgley is an English moral philosopher concerned with animal rights). The portrayal of animals serves also as a trigger for moral and political debates, particularly on the question of ethical treatment of animals and equal consideration of the interests, and the dismal situation of post-apartheid South Africa.

In order to show the reasons for the contemporary form of the relationship of humans to animals, it was necessary to present a historical overview of this relationship. The first, theoretical part of the thesis therefore focuses on the topic of the development of the human-animal relationship and comes to the conclusion that despite all the changes that have occurred in the last 100 years in the field of biology and philosophy, the predominant belief of hierarchy in nature prevails – at the bottom are one-cell organisms and man dwells at the summit. But does such a division exist in nature, or is it man who projects his own world view into it? It seems that it is human society that brings the structure into nature and thus remains within a largely anthropocentric view. Such a hierarchy would not function in nature – the predator and the prey are dependent on each other and naturally maintain population levels and balance within the ecosystem.<sup>29</sup> This does not work with humans, however: given limitless depletion of natural resources, humans are capable of putting humankind into life-threatening situations.

---

29 Human interference may endanger the continuity and balance of an ecosystem as was the case in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, for example, when European settlers introduced rabbits to Australia, and due to the lack of predators, the wild rabbit population grew rapidly and soon became a major problem for the colonists' vegetable gardens.

Thanks to historical and anthropological research at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that enabled us to create a reconstruction of pre-historical culture, it was found that prehistory was the only era when the status of animals was equal to that of humans. Humans had to fight hard with nature in order to survive. Apart from obtaining food, however, hunting served later as a ritual of power and supremacy over other creatures. It is important to note that hunting and angling remains an expression of human social status (Kruuk 79-89) as is meat eating. According to many philosophers (Ryder, Patterson), it was essential for humans to subjugate their surroundings in order to survive. This was the time when the human-animal relationship was given its shape, and it was the domestication of animals that played a significant role therein 10, 000 – 16, 000 years ago. Domestication marked a great progress for humans; however, according to Kohák, this act served as a model situation for all the oppression of human and non-human beings (36). Also Patterson claims that humans were first able to subjugate non-human animals, and only after that were they capable of subjugating other people (27).

The historical overview of the human-animal relationship revealed the imbalance of this relationship and the resourcefulness of human mind that is able to justify practically anything – be it Descartes performing vivisections and his belief that animals cannot feel pain because they cannot acquire a language, or most people who believe that animals are to be exploited and that the cruel treatment of animals in laboratories or in slaughterhouses is not real since it is not visible. The notion of the subjugation of non-human animals represents a highly influential aspect in our everyday lives although people might not be able to realise it. It leads to a normalisation of our views on the subjugation of any living creature.

The motifs of oppression also seem to be pivotal in as far as the work of J. M. Coetzee is concerned, both in his fiction and non-fiction. The second, analytical part of the thesis that provides an interpretation of three of Coetzee's works of fiction *Disgrace*, *The Lives of Animals* and "The Old Woman and the Cats" reveals that the portrayal of oppression and power abuse in these works often appears in connection with the portrayal of animals – as in *The Lives of Animals* where the main protagonist criticises modern animal

husbandry factories by comparing them and what occurs in them to the atrocities that happened during the Holocaust, for example.

It was also found out that animals in J. M. Coetzee's work often function as a bridge that relates the aspects of animal abuse to that of other human beings. This is prominent especially in the language Coetzee uses, for example in *Disgrace* where animal tropes are used for labelling weak or humiliated humans, e.g. Melanie depicted as a meek, silent, rabbit while David is raping her, or Lucy that has to accept the fact that she will have to live under Petrus' reign with no rights or dignity "like a dog" (*Disgrace* 219). Aspects of human oppression emerge particularly in *Disgrace* where are also connected with the contemporary political and social situation of South Africa in the aftermath of the end of the apartheid era in 1994. Such image is depicted, for example, when David digs a hole for Lucy's killed dogs and thinks about the fact that dogs in South Africa are trained to growl at the sight of a black person, and that the three black attackers who killed the dogs must have felt great victory killing the dogs and therefore destroying the symbols of white oppression. Coetzee's portrayal of controversial political and moral issues, such as the ethical treatment of animals in the bio-industry or the violence that is being committed on both the black and white population in the new (contemporary) South Africa that evolved from the long-running brutal oppression of black population during the apartheid era, have elicited sharp criticism, and he has been blamed several times for being political in his literary works. Yet a political author would be expected to provide solutions besides presenting his own clear political arguments. Coetzee, however, provides neither solutions nor political arguments. On the contrary, as regards ethical responsibility towards animals in animal farming and the problematic situation of the post-apartheid era, for example, Coetzee, despite appearances, remains an impartial observer whose literary characters do the arguing for him – as in *The Lives of Animals*, where Elizabeth's opinions are sharply criticised and attacked by her audience and academic staff, and where Elizabeth often appears to have weak or confusing argumentation. Furthermore, concerning political situation of post-apartheid South Africa in *Disgrace*, the act of Lucy's accepting the baby and her destiny to start a new life with nothing may be seen as Coetzee's attempt of

reconciliation of the historical oppression by accepting the consequences of the apartheid era. Although one dominant perspective concerned with ethical or political issues is often presented in Coetzee's works, one that could be considered as the author's own, this perspective is constantly challenged and attacked by the characters of his literary creations that use very powerful and logical arguments. There can be more than one reason for Coetzee to do so – one could be the author's urge to convey the most objective point of view possible, in fact a critical analysis of the problem – such an approach can be seen after Elizabeth's lectures in *The Lives of Animals* when her opponent, professor O'Hearne, presents strong arguments against animal rights movement using historical and ethical facts. The other reason for Coetzee's self-argumentation in his fiction could be the author's inner dialogue that he is having over these issues questioning his own opinions and beliefs. Elizabeth and her son John constantly debate over the moral responsibility that people have toward animals in "The Old Woman and the Cats" and John often does not understand what Elizabeth means. Yet, at the end, there is no resolution, the reader never learns what the outcome of the debates is. This latter attitude can be also seen in Coetzee's conviction that his own opinions and beliefs are not interesting, which he has presented at least in one of his speeches. J. M. Coetzee is greatly restrained regarding presenting his own beliefs and opinions publicly. That is perhaps the reason why he chose literature as a platform for conveying them; a platform that offers certain freedom and safety. Thanks to the potential of this medium supported by Coetzee's literary recognition (he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature and is a double winner of Man Booker Prize), his literature was able to affect a greater amount of people than it would have affected had he chosen the form of academic essays and lectures that predominantly offer a definite opinion, as it is seen in the lectures of his alter-ego Elizabeth Costello who fails to convey her message due to her too aggressive arguments.

Coetzee's portrayal of animals that often appear in unpleasant situations in his fiction awakens sentiments in his readers and therefore opens their empathetic capabilities that can lead to a greater moral consideration not only towards animals. Animals in J. M. Coetzee's fiction therefore serve not only as means for emphasizing the political, social

and ethical topics, but also as end in promoting animal rights and in the fight against animal cruelty.

## 5 Works Cited

### Primary sources

Bruyckere, Berlinde de, and J.M Coetzee. *Cripplewood: Berlinde De Bruyckere & J.M. Coetzee: Kreupelhout*. New Haven, Mercatorfonds, 2013.

Coetzee, J. M. *Disgrace*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1999.

Coetzee, J. M., et al. *The Lives of Animals*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1999.

### Secondary Sources

"About." *Peter Singer*, [www.petersinger.info/about/](http://www.petersinger.info/about/). Accessed 12 July 2017.

"All About PETA." *PETA*, [www.peta.org/about-peta/learn-about-peta/](http://www.peta.org/about-peta/learn-about-peta/). Accessed 18 July 2017.

Adams, Carol J., and Josephine Donovan. *Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations*. London, Durham University Press. 1995.

Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa contra gentiles*. Notre Dame, IN, University of Notre Dame Press, 1975.

Aristotle, and C. D. C. Reeve. *Politics*. Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1998.

Austlit. "J. M. Coetzee." *Austlit: Discover Australian Stories*, [www.austlit.edu.au/austlit/page/A65182?sth=undefined](http://www.austlit.edu.au/austlit/page/A65182?sth=undefined). Accessed 30 June 2017.

Bentham, Jeremy. *A Fragment on Government with an Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1967.

Bentham, Jeremy. *The Principles of Morals and Legislation*. Amherst, Prometheus Books, 1988.

Boehmer, E. "Sorry, Sorrier, Sorriest. The Gendering of Contrition in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*." *Cultured Violence*, Ohio University Press, 2006, pp. 135-147.

- Browning, Christopher R. *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942*. London, Cornerstone Digital, 2014.
- Burkhead, Michael Dow. *A Life For a Life: The American Debate Over the Death Penalty*. Jefferson, NC, McFarland & Co, 2009.
- Butler, Judith Pamela. *Precarious Life the Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London, Verso, 2006.
- Coetzee, J. M., and David Attwell. *Doubling the Point: Essays and interviews*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1992.
- Coetzee, John Maxwell. *Giving Offense: Essays on Censorship*. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Douglas, Mary. *Implicit Meaning: Essays in Anthropology*. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975.
- “Dr Richard D Ryder.” *Dr Richard D Ryder*, [www.62stockton.com/richard/index.html](http://www.62stockton.com/richard/index.html). Accessed 12 July 2017.
- “Ethics - Animal ethics: Animal rights.” *BBC*, BBC, [www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/animals/rights/rights\\_1.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/animals/rights/rights_1.shtml). Accessed 19 July 2017.
- Francione, Gary L. *Introduction to Animal Rights: Your Child or the Dog?* Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 2007.
- Franklin, Adrian. *Animals and Modern Cultures: A Sociology of Human-Animal Relations in Modernity*. Sage Publications, 1999.
- Graef, Ortwin de. “Suffering, Sympathy, Circulation: Smith, Wordsworth, Coetzee (But There’s a Dog).” *European Journal of English Studies* 7, no. 3, 2003, pp. 311–31, DOI: 10.1076/EJES.7.3.311.27986.
- Graham, Lucy. “‘Yes, I am Giving Him up’: Sacrificial Responsibility and Likeness With Dogs in JM Coetzee’s recent fiction1.” *Scrutiny* 2, vol. 7, no. 1, 2002, pp. 4–15, DOI: 10.1080/18125441.2002.9709639.

- Hargrove, Eugene C. *The Animal Rights / Environmental Ethics Debate: The Environmental Perspective*. Albany, State University of New York Press, 1992.
- Heister, Himlar. *The Sympathetic Imagination in the Novels of J.M. Coetzee*. 2014, edoc.hu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/18452/17838/heister.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y. Accessed 4 July 2017.
- Jolly, Rosemary. "‘Going to the Dogs’: ‘Humanity’ in J. M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*, *The Lives of Animals* and South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission." *Cultured Violence*, Ohio University Press, 2006, pp. 148–171.
- Kant, Immanuel, and Louis Infield. *Lectures on Ethics*. New York, Harper & Row, 1963.
- Kohák, Erazim. *Zelená svatozář: kapitoly z ekologické etiky*. Praha, Sociologické nakladatelství SLON, 2000.
- Koops, Bert-Jaap, et al. *Engineering the Human: Human Enhancement Between Fiction and Fascination*. Berlin, Springer, 2013.
- Kruuk, Hans. *Hunter and Hunted: Relationships Between Carnivores and People*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Kyle, Donald G. *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*. London, Routledge, 2000.
- Leist, Anton. *J.M. Coetzee and Ethics: Philosophical Perspectives on Literature*. New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 2010.
- Massey, Will. "Bloodsport and the Michael Vick Dogfighting Case: A Critical Cultural Analysis." *Thesis / Dissertation ETD*, 2012.
- Montaigne, Michel. *The Essays of Montaigne: Volume IV: The Essays of Montaigne. Volume IV*. Harvard University Press, 1925.
- Moses, Michal Valdez. "State of Discontent." *Reason.com*, 20 June 2008, reason.com/archives/2008/06/20/state-of-discontent. Accessed 29 June 2015.
- Olson, Greta. "‘Like a Dog’: Rituals of Animal Degradation in J. M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace* and Abu Ghraib Prison." *Journal of Narrative Theory*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2014, pp. 116–156, DOI: 10.1353/jnt.2014.0002.

- Patterson, Charles. *Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust*. New York, Lantern Books, 2002.
- “Professor J. M. Coetzee.” *Literature*, 1 Jan. 1970, [literature.britishcouncil.org/j-m-coetzee](http://literature.britishcouncil.org/j-m-coetzee). Accessed 29 June 2015.
- Regan, Tom, and Peter Singer. *Animal Rights and Human Obligations*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice Hall, 1989.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Social Contract and The First and Second Discourses*. New York, Yale University Press, 2002.
- Ryder, Richard D. *Animal Revolution: Changing Attitudes Towards Speciesism*. Bloomsbury, Bloomsbury Academic, 2000.
- Scruton, Roger. *Animal Rights and Wrongs*. London, Metro, 2000.
- Singer, Peter. *Animal Liberation*. New York, Ecco, 2002.
- Splendore, Paola. “Coetzee and Costello: ‘What is an Author?’” *Step Across This Line, Proceedings of the 3rd Conference*. Ed. Contenti, Guarducci, Splendore. Venice, Cafoscarina, 2003: 145–152.
- Strange, Carolyn. *Qualities of Mercy: Justice, Punishment, and Discretion*. Vancouver, UBC Press, 2011.
- Taylor, Chloë. “The Precarious Lives of Animals.” *Philosophy Today*, vol. 52, no. 1, 2008, pp. 60–72, DOI: 10.5840/philtoday200852142.
- Tester, Keith. *Animals and Society (RLE Social Theory): The Humanity of Animal Rights*. Routledge, 2014.
- The Holy Bible: King James Version*. Peabody, MA, Hendrickson Bibles, 2010.
- “THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT, 1960.” *Animal Law Legal Center*, 1 Jan. 1960, [www.animallaw.info/statute/cruelty-prevention-cruelty-animals-act-1960](http://www.animallaw.info/statute/cruelty-prevention-cruelty-animals-act-1960). Accessed 17 July 2017.

Thomas, Keith. *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500-1800*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1996.

Tremaine, Louis. "The Embodied Soul: Animal Being in the Work of J. M. Coetzee." *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 44, no. 4, 2003, pp. 587–612, DOI: 10.2307/3250587.

"United States Holocaust Memorial Museum." *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, [www.ushmm.org/learn/holocaust-encyclopedia](http://www.ushmm.org/learn/holocaust-encyclopedia). Accessed 6 July 2017.

"Video: JM Coetzee Reads." *Sunday Times Books LIVE @ Sunday Times Books LIVE*, [bookslive.co.za/blog/2011/10/28/video-jm-coetzee-reads-the-old-woman-and-the-cats-at-jaipur-literary-festival/](http://bookslive.co.za/blog/2011/10/28/video-jm-coetzee-reads-the-old-woman-and-the-cats-at-jaipur-literary-festival/). Accessed 29 June 2015.

Voltaire. *Philosophical dictionary*. Dover, Dover Publications, 2010.

Wear, A., et al. *The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Wise, Stephen M. "Animal rights." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., [www.britannica.com/topic/animal-rights](http://www.britannica.com/topic/animal-rights). Accessed 19 May 2017.

"What Is the ALF?" *What Is the ALF?*, [animalliberationfront.com/ALFront/WhatisALF.htm](http://animalliberationfront.com/ALFront/WhatisALF.htm). Accessed 18 July 2017.