Chapter Four

A Voice for the Voiceless

After focusing on the terrestrial creatures, the study moves towards Farley Mowat’s art of displaying the compassionate account of aquatic creatures. Two of his books entitled *A Whale for the Killing* and *Sea of Slaughter* have been discussed in this chapter. By late sixties, Mowat had already turned his attention from the Barren lands of the North to the Atlantic Ocean. *A Whale for the Killing* describes Mowat’s efforts to save a fin whale trapped in a saltwater pond near Burgeo, Newfoundland. He presents the torture of the trapped whale as a symbol for the frustration of the town people who had been trapped by the progress of industrialization. In *Sea of Slaughter* he concentrates on the mammals, birds, fishes with special emphasis on the sea mammals. Through this book he makes a constant plea that human beings should not be the eventual destroyer of the living world. The chapter highlights the heart-rendering compassion of the author for the extinction of the incredible aquatic creatures. Both narratives ironically loom a question at the cruel attitude and activities of human beings targeting the animate creation. In this fast-paced age, modern consumers go on annihilating the other creatures without thinking of the future condition of the planet earth. Mowat raises his voice to announce the message that humans should ‘live and let live’. Living is not so important as living together.
Whale has a unique place in the world of natural habitat. Ecologically it is precious. It has got an exceptional place in the human thought in general and literature in specific. It is known well that the thought of nineteenth century was dominated by many issues. The relationship between the land and the sea echoed the conflict between adventure and domesticity, between fishermen and city dwellers. The whale hunting was one of the major issues that became the subject of many writers.

Greenpeace and Sea Shepherds were the two conservation societies working with the mission to put an end to the illegal whaling in Antarctic. Peter Heller, the author of *The Whale Warriors* joined the crew of the vegan pirate ship named Farley Mowat. It was the flagship of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society. The mission of the crew was to find and stop the Japanese fishing fleet from killing whales. The ship and its eco-radical crew members were notorious enough for their hard line tactics to drive those whalers away from their prey. Heller discovered the crew as high spirited ones though they lacked sailing experience. They were prepared to risk their own lives to save the creatures they loved. When they stalked the Japanese whaling fleet, Japan threatened to send down defence aircraft and warships while Australia appealed for calm. The international media began to track the developing whale war. The crew of Mowat never meant any compromise in their challenge and never went back in their decision. They firmly believed that if the charismatic intelligent great whales could not be saved there was no hope for the rest of the planet. They considered any day saving a whale was a worthy
day to live. Heller was after the view that Japan's refusal to discontinue whaling was part of their feelings of Japan's cultural heritage being threatened by the west. Being straightforward to the cause of saving marine wildlife, Peter Heller sheds light on contemporary research indicating that the commercial exploitation of the ocean would unquestionably cause its ecological collapse. The obvious moral obligation is to stop driving other species to extinction.

As regard to literature on whales, Melville is one of the remarkable writers to popularize and philosophize the story of Moby Dick. Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* presents the story of a whaling voyage and the pursuit of a whale. Captain Ahab's monomania, as expressed in his obsessive pursuit of the whale, is an indirect commentary on the feelings of disillusionment in mid-nineteenth century America and on the idea that the single-minded pursuit of the protagonist is both vain and self-destructive.

It is well known that the American writer Michael Armstrong (1956) in his *AGVIQ: The Whale* writes about the real people, the Inupiaq who endured the Arctic territories for seven thousand years until modern world destroyed the ancient ways. But then the modern world itself was destroyed. *The Big Blue Whale* written by Nicola Davies (1958) a wildlife biologist is an informative introduction to the life of the biggest creature that has ever lived on the earth. The book is filled with facts and anecdotes ranging from the texture of the blue whale's skin to its diet, its enormous size and its means of communication.
The blue whale makes a hum that can travel for thousands of miles through the seas to reach other blue whales.

Mowat goes one step ahead in this way. He devoted himself to the cause of establishing harmonious and peaceful relationship between human beings and wildlife, earthly and unearthly. This association has done considerable effort for the awareness of people about whales in the one hand and in the other it worked for the safety of the whales. In fact, he chose to live with them and for them registering his voice to get his mission realized throughout the world. He aspired for a state where human beings could be the guardians of all rare species at the verge of extinction. Human beings should live and let live other beings with which they share this planet. He is outraged when man exhibits himself as a superior being licensed to subdue the 'other beings'.

Mowat left Newfoundland as he was sad, shocked and disillusioned by an incident that had occurred in 1967. A pregnant fin whale swam into Burgeo's Aldridge Pond where it was trapped until the next spring tide. To his dismay, the town folk made a sport of tormenting the majestic creature. Mowat could never digest those horrible events he witnessed. Of late, being unable to redress his pain he wrote *A Whale for the Killing* in 1972. *It* is a heart touching account of the struggle of the whale to save its life in which the author acts as a brave volunteer to help the voiceless aquatic creature in the effort. He has written it in his favourite first person furious style. The inscription on the outer
cover of the book conveys its theme which reads as "A Heart –Wrenching True Tale of Cruelty and Courage". It is Mowat's voice for the incredible unearthly voice.

The author, in fact, undertakes a heroic battle to save the life of the Whale. Even though he observed the torture of the trapped whale as an outlet for the frustration of the town people who had been trapped by the 'progress' of industrialization, the incident deepened only Mowat's love of animals and embitterment with his fellow human beings. Thompson writes that “the book did arouse international attention to the plight of the whale as an endangered species, and that, more than anything else, is the true measure of its value” (DLB 39). The novel is a marvellous achievement in recording the accounts of the life and activities of whales. So to say, it can be treated as a document as well as a unique documentary in reflecting the threat posed to the whales by human beings. Peter Davison observes the significance of the whale incident in Mowat's career as a writer.

The Whale Episode would prove to be a pivotal incident, a turning point in Mowat's career as a writer. It deepened his sense of mystery about the animal world and darkened his disenchantment with his fellow man. That book moves between the echoing depths in which whales swim and the surface antipathy in which men quarrel. (WFM 8)
It was the month of January, 1967 in Newfoundland. Mowat along with his wife and some other passengers endured the crossing of the Cabot Strait to Port Aux Basques aboard in a ferry. It became very difficult for them to go by the ferry because of strong cold and snow storm. Most of the passengers were exhausted and lay helplessly and miserably in their cabins. At last, when the ferry reached the shore, most of the passengers traveled to St. John’s in a train running on narrow gauge for six hundred miles. Their destination was not St. John’s only. They had to go to different small fishing villages spread across the length and breadth of one hundred miles over there. So, they decided to reach South West Coast. They had to manage with a weekly coastal steamer named S.S. Burgeo, a very old and neglected steamer in which people still traveled. Skipper Ro, the Captain knew the author since he had traveled in this steamer earlier.

While traveling they had also to be brave enough to face the hazards of the ice covered deep sea. The captain suggested the author to stay in Burgeo, the largest settlement on the coast of that region. This place was ninety miles away to the east of Port Aux Basques on the shore. Scattering fishermen and seamen were its human inhabitants. The seas around the Burgeo Islands teemed with life. Seals, whales, even walrus lived in plenty. The Sou’ west Coast faced a vast sweep of waters rolling all the way up from the South Atlantic. Most of the time of the year, it was violent by wind. The Burgeo Islands were discovered by a Portuguese explorer, Joaz Alvarez Fagundez in 1520. The place was worst in bad weather but it had got good harbours. There were whale
hunters and French summer cold fishing centres. At least one or two families used to stay together against the rock-walled rim of ocean. In the inland, one could find the treeless granite hills. Till the 19th century, such people had lived there more or less unidentified. The author speaks about them: “Even later, the inhabitants of the place were innocent and unaware of the new breed of technological men who had come to dominate the planet. They continued to live in their own time and their own way; and their rhythm was the rhythm of the natural world” (AWK 8).

Mowat gives an account of his experience with those people by saying that they used to fishing traditionally. They were open to adversity and exhibited qualities of generosity and tolerance toward one another and toward strangers. He had found this characteristic only among the Eskimos. In fact, they were the best people that he promised himself that one day he would come and live among them and escape from the mechanical world that had its "idiot dedication to the bitch goddess, Progress" ( 8). During his visit to Burgeo in 1961, he happened to see a marvelous group of whales in the sea. Becoming curious he regarded that to be a gift of his visit to that place. Out of emotional outburst he writes “I have always been fascinated by the mysterious lives of the non-human animals who share this world with us …” (11).

Mowat describes that after 1949 Newfoundland formed self-government by being free from the British Colony and people gradually migrated to the South West Coast and its nearby areas. Mostly, they settled near the fish-
freezing plants. These fish plants, human garbage and sewage were defiled. The craze for materialism, greediness and unconcerned attitude to nature gradually destroyed the place. Modernity started affecting the people and the place. Sim Spencer once explained to the author that before the plant was established, every little place was comfortable on its own way. Every settlement was like a family and all families got along well. Everyone looked after himself and gave a quick hand when anyone needed. He continues saying that the universal sickness of modern society infected the dispossessed out-port people: “Now that's all gone abroad. … These times, everyone's jealous of t' other, and 't was never that way before. People is uncontented… Truth to tell, people is turning right hateful in Burgeo, these times” (19).

During his stay in Burgeo, the author happened to come across Onie and Simeon, two young fishermen. He came to know from them that before 1949, plenty of schooners used to come to the shore. That had been a golden time for them. But now, they collected only herrings and went to the sea for the reason that they loved fishing. When new systems and orders of life were introduced, only some people understood all those happenings. Fishermen were thrown to work for wages and they became slaves to one owner. When the plant workers raised their voice demanding their needs the plant owner simply closed down the plant and departed abandoning the plant and Burgeo itself. This resembles the situation that had made the life of the Eskimos miserable in the Barrens. When the White men introduced trading posts and offered big prices for fox pelts, the Eskimos gave up their traditional style of hunting for food and
learned to trap the white fox pelts for trade. It was a satisfactory change for them because they could live without much labour. As the plant owners attracted the fishermen, the trade men exploited the conditions of the Eskimos. When the price of the fox pelts fell, the traders closed the trading posts and left the land ignoring the native people. Mowat met another old man Samuel who narrated his past experiences. He said that there were plenty of big cats and mouse like animals earlier. Nevertheless people killed them for their sport. Gradually, the fish plant owner and the doctor who had migrated from Britain brought a great loss of animals for maintaining their aristocracy.

While visiting another area by crossing a suspension bridge, Mowat got a chance to talk to an old fisherman named Uncle Art. He seemed to develop interest for whales and informed that during his childhood, he had seen many whales. Immediately the author felt impressed as he was interested in the subject of whales. He went on thinking that probably the whales and human beings had common ancestry. Both had got life and development from water. They were born in the waters of the primal oceans. These creatures exiled themselves to the precarious environment of the dry land. Then evolution took place with the amphibians and the mammals. The human mammalian fathers stayed ashore and the mammalian forbears of the whales chose to return to the mother of all life, the sea. The whales who returned to the sea were free to go wherever and whenever they wished as they lived in a world where the climate was quite stable. They faced no shortage of food and there was no need to occupy or defend their boundary. The whales being close to the other
sea-dwellers achieved perfect adaptation to the sea environment. In comparison to whale, human beings grew intelligent by days and became a slave to technology. Man failed to look into the mystery of the mind of the whale. Intellectual supremacy made him dominate all other forms of life. Mowat describes the irony of existence of both the creatures carefully as he writes:

So whales and men diverged from the common ancestry, one to become the most lordly form of life in the oceans, and the other to become the dominant animal on the land. The day came when the two would meet. The meeting was not a peaceful one, in mutual recognition of each other’s worth. As usual, it was man who set the terms and he chose battle. It was a one-sided battle where man wielded the weapons, and the whales did the dying. (34)

The author speaks of the ecological balance existed between the whaling community and the whales themselves in early days. The early whaling community killed two or three whales a year. Like the people of the deer, they killed only to eat. It took a long time to eat a whale. They never killed them for sport or business and they posed no threat to the prosperity of the whales. But the modern men started slaughtering whales mercilessly making commerce out of them. People went on using different bony parts of whales for decoration and utensils. They made huge fortunes. The slaughter was so tremendous that by the wane of 19th century the hunt was coming to an end for the want of
whales. The Norwegians were the most ruthless killers of marine life. They started using whale guns and set up whale processing centres along their coast. Within ten years they doomed all the survived whales. By 1912 all the great whales had nearly vanished from the North Atlantic. However, the outbreak of First World War gave life to the surviving whales in northern waters. Mowat curses the technology that brought an end to the whale community and says, “The combination of man’s genius for destruction together with the satanic powers of his technology dyed the cold, green waters of the Antarctic Crimson with the heart’s blood of the whale nation (40).

The outbreak of the Second World War gave a pause to the slaughter of whales. But, after the War, the whalers started working with sophisticated weapons like sonar gear, radar and spotting aircraft. So, gradually, the number of blue whale and the fins started decreasing. To put it in nut a shell, the whales were at the verge of extinction. But nobody bothered to take any effective step to halt the butchery. It was even more painful to note that there were novels, non-fictional books and commercial films praising the manliness of the whale killers.

During Mowat’s visit to St. Pierre, he was startled to see a slaughter of twenty-three pothead whales. It was a sorry spectacle to the author while it was a grand exhibition to the 'townies' of St. Pierre. The skipper of a dragger of that locality informed him that there were evidences of killer whales that followed them and occasionally ate pothead calves. The author was impressed to see the
whales circling freely. He came to know that there was no justification in calling them “killer”. Once he found that the boatmen were making whaling a sport. A score of whales, although injured, none of them brought any harm to anybody and stayed there till the next morning, till the boatmen came and massacred them. People were enjoying these activities. The author remembers, “Many American and Canadian tourists were busy taking pictures of one another posing beside the dead behemoths. Something to show the folks back home” (55). To the eyes of the people, the bloody scene was a matter of entertainment. But to the author, it was a sheer display of human cruelty toward the majestic creatures. Mowat expresses his utter sympathy for whales. When he grows older, these whales become “a symbol of the ultimate secrets which have not yet been revealed to us by the ‘other’ animals” (57).

Before Christmas in 1962, he experienced watching a beautiful big fin whale. Then, each winter, Mowat and Claire looked forward to their arrival. Mowat observes that the whales are not the competitors with human beings in killing small fishes. Quoting one of his cetologist friends, Mowat says that very little is known about the life cycle and mind of whales. But men know more skills how to kill them.

The fishermen of Burgeo held a healthy relationship with the whales. Absolutely there was no conflict between the fishermen and the whales. Just like the people of ‘the Barrens’ and the wolves kept the caribou population intact for centuries, the fishermen and the whales contributed to the availability
of massive herring in the sea. They never posed threat to each other; nor were they competitors for the herring. There were more than enough of herring for whales and the fishermen. The whales and the fishermen had developed a remarkable familiarity. Whenever a whale came near a dory both went on their own way unconcernedly. It was the sort of existence that Mowat longed for.

Till modern man began his brutal exploitation of the sea, the oceans flooded with herring and whales. Mowat was aware that whales collected some food, may be up to a ton of food and then stopped it. In contrast, humans have no limit in the collection of food. He presents an amazing data that in 1969 more than one lakh and twenty thousand tons of herrings were taken by seiners in Newfoundland. By 1980, the herring fishery ceased for the loss of the fish entirely. As a result, the fishes like cod, halibut, haddock and salmon left with the threat of starvation.

Pollution has been yet another problem that dared to challenge the conservation of the aquatic world. Persons working on resource management argued and reported that it was a ridiculous to attempt to save whales as they were going to disappear anyway because of pollution. As Mowat records their views:

All the fish-eating species are at the top of oceanic food chains and they concentrate such pollutants as DDT, mercury and the rest of the stuff we are dumping into the sea. If those things don’t kill them outright, it will likely make them sterile, or at least
shorten their lives … Of course, if we did stop hunting them, it would certainly ease the total pressure they are under now and, who knows, they just might make out despite the pollution problem. (66)

By now, the countries have been increasingly dependent on whaling which they can never stop. They use whales for protein and fat for hungry human beings and to provide medicinal and industrial products essential for modern society. The author sums it up saying that modern men “Exploit . . . consume . . . excrete . . . at an over-accelerating pace . . . Such is the mad litany of our times” (67). Then, people learn how to prepare submarines following the movement of the whales. It has, in fact, a laminating lubricant that flows from the body that helps them move swiftly. He thus makes a survey of the baleen whales and he observes that whales helped each other during sickness. Their family bond is close and long lasting. The fin family groups also gather two or three times a year at one place. After the Second World War, Karl Karsleen, a Norwegian, took interest in doing business with harp seals and whales in great scale. Then, Thoraninn, a big sea-going catcher was introduced. The International Whaling Commission had hardly anything to do against them in whale conservation.

Mowat depicts the humane character of whales with an illustration. There was a rocky place called The Ha Ha which was visited by only the Burgeo fishermen and the whales. After the arrival of the seines, the finn
family went to the Ha Ha. Only the Burgeo fishermen and the whales were
fishing there. It so happened that once the boat machine of Hann brothers
(Keneth and Douglas) failed. The whales, out of compassion, stayed right along
the men giving up their fishing and offering help. Mowat remembers the words
of Douglass Hann who narrated the incident in his language style:

I can tell you, but them whales is some smart navigators, for they
never come high enough to do we any hurt. We was an hour
poking our way to the pushthrough what leads to Aldridges Pond,
and them whales stayed right along of we. Toward the end of it
they give up fishing and just come along like they knowed we
was into some kind of a kettle. Ken, he said may be they was
offering we a tow; but I suppose that’s only foolishness. (78)

The fisher men and the whales never posed a threat of rivalry or enmity
to each other. They behaved with perfect companionship. Mowat went to visit
the place to study more about the whales. He saw the Aldridges Pond. It was a
salt-water enclosure about half a mile length. It was present in the rocky
isthmus which separates The Ha Ha from Short Reach. There was a shallow
“pushthrough”(80) between it and The Ha Ha through which only small boats
could pass only at high water. The author visited that place once during his stay
in Burgeo.

He came back to his residence which was three kilometers away from
Alridges. But then a great event took place at the pond. Mowat says, “the pond
became the centre and the setting for an event which was to change our lives”.

(80) The Hann brothers were the local fishermen working at Aldridges mostly to get the herrings. But once, they were surprised to find a fin whale in the pond. They found that giant creature trying frantically to move out of that pond but it could not. Actually, it had come rushing somehow while chasing its prey. Attracted by the herring the whale slipped into the pond through the ‘pushthrough’ that was dangerously narrow and small. The whale was a female one.

Not just the female. She was still ravenous, and she had good reason for her gargantuan appetite; for she was carrying a calf within her vast womb, a new life growing at such a furious pace as to keep her perpetually hungry. So while the rest of her family took life easy, the female continued fishing in the dark, relying now on the high speed ‘dash,’ directed at the densest herring schools she could find. (86)

Extending all human concern Mowat uses the pronoun ‘she’ to address the whale which was almost captivated in the pond. Unless the water level rose to an extraordinary level, there could be no possibility for the whale’s escape. Mowat states, “The inexorable rhythm of the tide was the whale's key to freedom. . . . Nevertheless, she was inexorably drawn to the mouth of the narrow channel which was her only path to freedom” (88).
The Hann brothers informed the matter to the plant workers who at once turned to be bloody fellers. Later, Kenneth regretted to have informed them about the whale. The brothers wished the whale safe. But many men in Burgeo felt and planned otherwise. They collected rifles and other deadly ammunitions. In fact, they were the men who rejected their fishermen forefathers as they had been attracted by wage employment. They located the whale and started firing at it. They took it as a sport to injure and bleed the whale. When some of the local lads came to know about it they decided to visit the whale the next day and contribute their sport to kill it. The people from the fish-freezing plant could not kill the fish in one chance. Hence they left it for the next day.

The next day, as the sportsmen arrived the whale retreated to the middle of the Pond and submerged. Its surfacing was so brief that the sportsmen could not have much chance to spot it. But, soon they understood its pattern of appearances and shot their rifles accordingly. There were plenty of onlookers assembled in and around the pond. An elderly fisherman felt disconcerted by the scene and shouted that it was a pack of foolishness to attack the whale like that. Being upset by the change in the behaviour of the people Claire said:

It is so nice to be back among people who live simple and uncomplicated lives. We have really missed the people here. How I hope they are never spoiled by the savagery and selfishness that seems to be spreading over the whole world like a fog” (98)
Kenneth and Douglas felt that the whale was longing for some company and support from them. They let out herrings when she came high and never knew whether she ate them or not. On the next day when they returned to the pond, they observed some changes in her movements and appearance. She was not blowing high and her hide was peppered with white spots. It seemed she had those bullets into those spots. Hanns appealed the gunmen to hold off the rifles and clear of the pond. But George, the plant foreman claimed that they were assigned to finish off the whale and started firing. Deciding on some course of action two fishermen from Small Island met Mowat and informed him about the plight of the whale. Mowat contacted one Sim Spencer who was embarrassed by Mowat’s enquiry because the guy was aware of Mowat's interests. Like Sim many people were ashamed of what was going on in Aldridges. They did not prefer to discuss the matter with outsiders including Mowat. It remained long time in the mind of Mowat that Aldridges was a natural aquarium even to keep a blue whale comfortably. Now all his visions collapsed and he was obsessed with what would happen to the whale on the next day.

Next morning between twenty and twenty-five gunners rang Alridge Pond. They were well equipped with gun and heavy shells. The whale went to the middle of the pond and tried to be under the water for as much time as possible. Then, more boats arrived and more people gathered there. The shooters went on shooting at the whale whenever they got a chance. Till afternoon they tried but they could not kill it. The whale was only injured.
After most of the people left the place the whale was found swimming comfortably. Although Mowat had seen many friends at Aldridges Pond, none of them joined him to team against the merciless activities of the local people.

Again on a stormy Monday when the Hann brothers went into the pond for fishing they found the whale still alive and present in the other end of the pond. They discovered that “…the whale continued to cruise steadily around the deep part of the Pond” (101). They felt that the whale was not at all revengeful. When the weather improved on Tuesday noon, again a party of riflemen went to the pond. This time, the Burgeo Rangers, who worked as the local military force, went there with a systematic plan. Till Thursday, these cruel activities went on at the pond.

Early next morning, the author telephoned Danny Green, the skipper of a high-linking dagger and informed all these. He became anxious to come to him and to do something to save the whale because he was sure that the whale was very big and seemed to be a rare chance in millions. Ken said, “I tell you, it scared me some! Her mouth was closed but we could see ‘twas big enough to swallow a dory and room to spare” (85). Mowat continued to say that if the whale was left alive, Burgeo would become famous all over the world. They informed this to the police too. Then, with his wife and Danny, the author ventured into the pond and anchored the two boats in deep water near the south end of it. When they could not see the whale for some time, Mowat personally concluded that the whale had escaped. Suddenly when they saw the whale
coming out, they became speechless. To worsen the condition, they witnessed numerous marks of bullets, holes and slashes across the back of the animal and still it was swimming smoothly. The author identified it as the second largest animal ever to live on earth. He was at a loss to understand the mentality of men who dared to cause those wounds on such a majestic creature. There was no motive of food or profit. The men did it only out of a lust to kill. Besides appearing like a submarine or a house, the whale possessed the strength of smashing their boats within no time. But it never did that but continued to swim as usual. It appeared to be in good health and the holes caused by the bullets were not bleeding. It showed some strange interest by being close to the boat of the author after deciding that there was no danger. At dusk, Mowat and his associates reluctantly left the pond. He got assurance from the police that they would patrol there to save it from shooting. Mowat was committed to explore all the possibilities to rescue the whale. He requested the fish plant owner to give notice to his employees not to harm the fish. Then for further safety measure, he informed this to the Federal Fisheries Office in St. John’s Newfoundland. Also, he informed this to the Central Fisheries Research Station near Montreal to help save the life of the rare species. But they said, “the department whale expert is in the United States studying whale skeletons in museums” (114). The author reserves his contempt for science that could not contribute to save a living whale while its men studied on the skeletons. Then, the author sought the help of his publisher Jack McClelland in Toronto. He continued to contact some marine biologists all across Canada. But they gave
just valueless lectures and dubious opinions. Still then Mowat was determined to make efforts. In the words of Patterson:

Mowat returned to the strong defense of wildlife after an 80-ton fin whale became caught in a tidal pond near his home of Burgeo, Newfoundland. To Mowat’s horror, townspeople amused themselves by shooting at the whale with rifles. In writing *A Whale for the Killing* (1972), Mowat reserved his harshest words for the government and for scientists, who reacted too slowly – or didn’t react at all- to save the whale’s life. (3)

For the weather was not yet moderate, the author could not go to the Aldridges. But he was deeply frustrated and worried and helplessly thought of how to save the life of the whale and make it free. He felt there was no meaning in discussing the ridiculous activities of men, better use the time to save the precious life of the rare species. Thus he says, “My duty, obligation, purpose – whatever it might be called – did not lie with the man; it lay solely with the trapped whale” (AWK 116). As per his knowledge and experience, he decided that he must go on providing the whale with herrings so that it could eat and live. But there were no herrings in the pond. Equally important was the matter of protecting the whale from the murderous sportsmen. Danny Green informed him that there was every possibility of the local men bringing more harm to the whale. So, the author became helpless. He then informed this to the Minister of Fisheries for Newfoundland but got a harsh and hopeless reply.
When Mowat was running skeleton of the whole situation, he went to the extent of thinking that many men took him mad. The wife of the deputy mayor scourged that Burgeo people had every right to kill the whale and the carcass could be used as dog food. The author was blaming, within him, the science that could not save the most remarkable animal. While Mowat was taking measures to save the life of a rare creature, the treacherous people aimed for its carcass. To Mowat, anything including science that contradicted to the existence of 'other beings' was devoid of ecological contemplation. Again he felt that just saving the whale might lead to perpetual captivity and so the beast should be set free from Aldridges Pond and it should be kept alive till then. Mowat was determined to give the whole story to the press and thereby to win the support of Burgeo mass. Claire also wished the same. In the mean time, the author was bit comforted by the words of Dr. David Sergeant a biologist with the Federal Department of Fisheries who offered to rouse his fellow scientists to the point of saving the whale.

On another Sunday, early in the morning, the author along with Onie went to the Aldridges and decided to spend the whole day there observing the behavior of the whale and recording the same. Many other people including fishermen known to Mowat also had assembled to watch the movements of the whale. After sometime, some of them decided to go into the pond and drive out the whale into the sea anyhow. The author could not resist them from their decision. The situation was interrupted by the arrival of a group of sportsmen who were determined to end the life of the whale at any cost. In the mean time,
when he requested the policemen to do something to prevent them, they said that they would not interfere because those people were not breaking law. The next moment, the entire pond turned to be a pandemonium. While some people were even throwing stones at it, the author prevented them. He went on promising that if the whale remained alive, Burgeo would be very famous that would lead to the development of the place.

The whale slowly drifted off the shoals and slid from sight. People started moving back one by one and the pond became empty of human beings except Onie and the author. Feeling guilty some people turned their faces away when they were passing Mowat who had shamed them. Mowat's journal note reflects his bewilderment and sense of loss:

…they are essentially good people. I know that, but what sickens me is their simple failure to resist the impulse of savagery . . . they seem to be just as capable of being utterly loathsome as the bastards from the cities with their high-powered rifles and telescopic sights and their mindless compulsion to slaughter everything alive, from squirrels to elephants . . . I admired them so much because I saw them as a natural people, living in at least some degree of harmony with the natural world. Now they seem nauseatingly anxious to renounce all that and throw themselves into the sinking quagmire of our society which has perverted everything natural within itself, and is now busy destroying
everything natural outside itself. How can they be so bloody stupid? How could I have been so bloody stupid? (129)

Onie remarked that the whale was going to die anyway. This statement pained the author and made him seriously depressed. Again he withdrew his concern from the people and concentrated his attention exclusively upon the whale. In public retaliation, Mowat wrote *A Whale for the Killing* to blacken Burgeo’s name from one end of Canada to the other. According to Wane Grady, “Mowat was privately dismayed that the hardy, natural seafarers could be just as capable of being utterly loathsome as the bastards from the cities. It was a bitter realization; it changed Mowat’s life” (68).

The author observed the presence of the male fin whale that could not join his mate. It remained outside the pond and responded by raising its voice whenever the female whale sounded. He was just right off the cove all the time when Mowat and others were to the pond. The Hanns saw him all the time whenever they went in and out of the pond. In fact, they were pair and communicated through water. Not only that; the male whale was driving herring toward his pregnant wife. However, the male left the place when the pond turned chaos. Mowat does not elaborate this love episode lest his major concern be diverted.

On another day in spite of bad weather the author along with Onie went to observe the condition of the injured whale. He tried to drive the other boatmen away when they still wanted to sport with the life of the whale. But
those people became happy as they could drive their boats on the back of the whale speedily making more injuries. Mowat and Onie spent the entire day there and they came back in the evening. They felt happy to know that an influential person of Burgeo, the Premier Mr. J.R. Smallwood had managed to collect money from different sources to buy herrings for the whale. The news of the whale in the pond went to international level. As the author hinted earlier the whale put Burgeo on map. Even Mr. Smallwood offered help for protecting the whale by the order of the Government of Newfoundland. He put up a public notice saying the whale must not be tormented and Aldridges pond was closed to all boats without permission.

Right from the beginning, Onie, who was not affected by modern life, was greatly drawn by the whale and deeply affected by its miserable plight. He stood by Mowat in all his attempts to save the whale. Once they saw the whole body of the whale in the icy clarity of the water. When Mowat tried to measure the damage caused by the gunners, they noticed a layer of yellowish white blubber in her muscle tissue and numerous other wounds and white breaks which were none other than bullet holes. Even in this condition, Mowat was extremely optimistic that he would win 'the battle for the whale's life and freedom'. To the worst of all, it became very clear that the whale was pregnant.

The author was in a dilemma how to get live herrings and provide that to the whale. At this stage, he observed the decimation of herring schools which were supposed to be the legitimate food of whales. Mowat had witnessed a
similar condition of living beings in 1947 when he watched the mass migration of tens of thousands of Barren land caribou over the Keewatin tundra. At that time it had seemed unthinkable to him if anything could diminish such multitude of living creature. Yet, before a decade had passed, the caribou had been almost eliminated from much of their vast arctic range. As such, in 1967 it was unimaginable to him that the vast number of herring which swam in large groups in North Atlantic could ever be diminished by man's gruesome predation. As it happened to the caribou, by 1972 the herring schools had been so massively decimated that the biologists predicted an end to the herring fishery with in a decade. The people of the Barrens were maintaining the caribou population as they were killing them for food alone. There had been a coexistence of caribou and their people. Such system of life had been prevailing for centuries till the arrival of the White men who strained the lives of both the deer and their people. Similarly, the herring schools and the fishermen had been coexisting in the North Atlantic for centuries unmeasured. When new technology affected the fishermen's lives, the strength of herring schools also started fading.

By the help of the Hanns and Curt, Mowat could collect some herrings and with much difficulty they poured them into the pond. The author faced the problem of paying money to the fishermen those who had provided him with the herrings. He did not receive any money promised by several men. Some remarked that it was a cruel waste for the government to spend money to feed a whale. The presence of the whale gave a chance to the local politicians to
befool the people of the locality promising the development of the locality with whale culture. When he got tired, he dozed and strange dreams came to him. "The fish had become a veritable monster and I was fleeing from her - - - drowning in the unfamiliar element. I woke, sweating, and knew the truth" (AWK 168). He realized that this kind of event was obviously pre-destined. This was an occasion to see the strange relation between humans and the other natural creatures. He lapsed into sheer emotion thinking of all these. He writes vividly:

The whale was not alone in being trapped. We were all trapped with her. If the natural patterns of her life had been disrupted, then so had ours. An awesome mystery had intruded into the closely circumscribed order of our lives; one that we terrestrial bipeds could not fathom, and one, therefore, that we could react against with instinctive fear, violence, and hatred. This riddle from the deeps was the measure of humanity’s unquenchable ignorance of life. This impenetrable secret, which had become the core of our existence in this place, was a mirror in which we saw our own distempered faces . . . and they were ugly. (168-69)

Already that was the Friday of the second week of his stay with the whale. The whale was still in prison. Mowat spoke to the Canadian Navy to deepen the south west channel and planned for injecting drugs so as to shift her to the sea. But the entire process seemed risky. He tried for the Harmon, a
government trailer specialized in herring collection. But it delayed in reaching him. Some Sou’westers proposed to retain the whale for Burgeo instead of setting her to the sea. Mowat ignored all these futile comments. Rather, he concentrated on three essentials: keeping the whale fed, keeping her protected and arranging to set her free. He was troubled by the presence of certain swellings found under her skin. But he became happy to see that it was moving and occasionally making sounds. Once it rose about fifty feet from the dory of Mowat and his fisherman friend. She, instead of just breaking the surface, thrust her whole head out of the calm waters. The gigantic head appeared to rear directly over them and moved like a living cliff. It might have been a moment of terror, but Mowat felt no fear even when she altered course so that one cyclopean orb looked directly at them. She had deliberately emerged from her own element as far as she could in order to see them in theirs. Though her purpose was inscrutable, Mowat could recognize that it was not inimical. Then she submerged and a few seconds later passed directly under the dory. She passed so gently and smoothly that no motion was felt except when the vast flukes made the dory bob a little. It was then Mowat heard the voice of the fin whale as he mentions: “It was a long, low, sonorous moan with unearthly overtones in a higher pitch. It was unbelievably weird and bore no affinity with any sound I have heard from any other living thing. It was a voice not of the world we know” (174).

In his Rescue the Earth Mowat states emotionally, “Then I heard her voice – a throbbing, sonorous moan, with unearthly overtones almost more felt
than heard. It was a voice not of our world” (21). When the whale had passed, Onie sat as though he was paralyzed. After some relax he anxiously told Mowat, “That whale . . . she spoke to we! I’tinks she spoke to we!” (AWK 174). Mowat nodded for he believed that she had purposefully tried to acknowledge that she recognised at least they were on her side. Mowat continues to write,

So long as I live I shall hear the echoes of that haunting cry. And they will remind me that life itself – not human life – is the ultimate miracle upon this earth. I will hear those echoes even if the day should come when none of her nation is left alive in the desecrated seas, And the voices of the great whales have been silenced forever. (175)

He felt as if this sound was echoed in his heart and likely to be echoed in the ears of the future generations. There may not be whales at all. But this sound will be echoed miraculously forever and ever.

Many times Mowat’s attempts of collecting herring to feed the whale resulted in failure. He suffered an immeasurable agony when he observed that the whale understood what the author was trying to do and that she was desperately hungry. Then, he planned for more food for it and got ready for seining. The next day, again he became hopeful as he got some financial help sent by many people through post. Many of them contained small cheques and gifts from all sorts of people including school children and housewives.
The gist of what they said was one and the same. They begged him sometimes in extravagant words to save and free the great creature.

Once when there was severe flurry in the pond, Mowat and Onie rushed there thinking that the whale had escaped as the water in the cannel was higher than ever before. He was almost sure that it had succeeded in its attempt. But this jubilation did not last as he saw the whale moving in the pond like 'a colossal sea monster'. It did not show any indication of knowing they were near to it. As the weather was very violent they returned home.

The next day, a fisherman from Small Island telephoned that he had seen the whale and it had been bleeding badly. Hearing this he frantically called Curt and went to Aldridges. He found her lying directly before him. Her chin was resting on the shore and her body was in deep waters. She resembled a ship with her bows ashore. Mowat, in a state of frenzy, commanded the mighty whale to shift herself and even tried to push her off by force. Curt was dumbfounded by the hysterical acts of Mowat. When she finally moved, Curt said that she had deliberately gone ashore as she was too sick. Mowat too understood her condition. Also there was vomiting stirring around the place where her head had lain. This disgusting smell reminded him of the deadly scene he witnessed in the war front. "There was the stench. It was familiar now and well remembered . . . the same rancid stink which had made me retch away from the gangrene-rotted bodies of soldiers in Sicily in 1943" (188). The whale moved but could not submerge, because the swellings beneath her skin were
vast reservoirs of pus and bloody infection. She reached the opposite shore and rested her mighty head upon the rocks. Curt, being offended, shook his head in bewilderment when Mowat said that the whale would sink if she stayed in deep water. Mowat regretted over his failure to treat her bullet wounds. He was still more frightened to leave her unprotected especially during her last moments of life. Mowat could hear her moaning with a desolate cry from a distance:

It was the same muffled disembodied and unearthly sound, seeming to come from an immense distance, out of the sea, out of the rocks around us, out of the air itself. It was a deep vibration, low pitched and throbbing, moaning beneath the wail of the wind in the cliffs of Richard's Head. It was the most desolate cry that I have ever heard. (189)

The whale suffered from heavy infection caused by the bullet wounds inflicted by the men of Burgeo. The author appealed for providing antibiotic treatment to the whale. Two doctors proposed that they would administer antibiotic drugs if he could get them from somewhere. Mowat wrote a press release with a plea for help and donations of antibiotics and injection equipment. C.B.C broadcast a special bulletin with an appeal for massive donations of antibiotics. There was immediate response from many quarters. All these boasted his confidence to save the whale. This is how the whale put Burgeo really on the map.
Mowat had sleepless nights in tension awaiting the charter flights with drugs and experts. In the meantime Claire received a phone call that informed them that the whale was gone and they could not find her anywhere. While he was still expecting the arrival of the first plane, he attended yet another phone call that said again that there was no sign of the whale in the pond and she had gone out of it. Then Mowat concluded, "Gone? . . she's not gone. She's dead" (195). The caller from Sou'westers club requested Mowat to announce that the whale had escaped since he was frightened that the public would murder the club members. Mowat refused and said, “. . . You're right about that. Indeed you are. They'll murder you . . . just as Burgeo murdered the whale. Wouldn't you say that was fair enough?” (195).

He asked all news reporters and people preparing to come to Burgeo, "Tell them it's all over… Tell them I'm sorry; Tell them they can all go home again"(196). C.B.C station made a special announcement that Moby Joe, the trapped Burgeo whale had disappeared and was presumed dead.

Thus the battle to save the whale ended in defeat. The next day, all newspapers published the news of her death. Claire wrote in her journal, How sad we are on this bright and lovely day. Burgeo looks so beautiful, and I don't care anymore. Our whale is gone . . . I could not stop thinking about the savage mentality of the men who stood around the pond and emptied their rifles into that huge and harmless animal. Surely they are the beasts, not the whale. . .
Now it is over. Farley and I are alone with ourselves, having to face the depressing reality of what life will be like if we stay on here…. (200)

On the 8\textsuperscript{th} of February, Wednesday Burgeo returned to its normal fashion. People of Burgeo felt as though they missed something of high value. They became speechless before the author. He met a few people who were concealing their feelings. Another side, he heard girls singing in disgust:

\begin{quote}
Moby Joe is dead and gone . . .
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Farley Mowat, he won’t stay long . . . (201)
\end{quote}

(Quoted as given in the text)

He sat for a long time locked in the confines of his mind souring the bitter taste of defeat. Then, slowly, he became conscious of the eternal sounding of the sea. Gradually, his thoughts drifted away from himself and the world of men.

The author weeps with a deeper vision that “. . . Man, having made himself the ultimate stranger on his own planet, has doomed himself to carry into the silence of his final hour” (201). The eighty ton harmless whale became a heap of infected rotten meat in the water. Mowat expresses his regret that the men who shot the whale might not have realized that much. The whale became a live memory and imprinted a myth in the name of “Moby Joe”. \textit{A Whale for the Killing} stands ironical for the entire humanity.

As the whale eventually died a gruesome, excruciating death, it presented a health hazard owing to the infections resulting from its numerous
open wounds. Many in the town feared that her proximity to the Burgeo fish canning plant would force it to close, causing unemployment. Its gigantic corpse would be a peril to ship traffic. A pandemonium broke out among local officials. Mowat is thrown to feel a sense of irrecoverable loss and he expresses his grief:

For the first time since the trapped whale vanished, I became fully aware of a rending sense of loss. It was dark, and there was none to know that I was weeping ... weeping not just for the whale that died, but because the fragile link between her race and mine was severed. (RE 23)

Mowat states the reason for his tears and uncontrollable agony. He is worried of the ever widening gap between human beings and other beings. He is not worried of the loneliness caused by the people he loved. He is all the more worried and depressed of the alienating attitude of human beings towards the magnificent animals in creation that have no voice to represent. So he whimpers:

I wept, because I knew that this fleeting opportunity to bridge, no matter how tenuously, the ever widening chasm that is isolating mankind from the totality of life, had perished in a welter of human stupidity and ignorance--some part of which was mine.
I wept, not for the loneliness which would now be Claire's and mine as aliens among people we had grown to love, but for the inexpressibly greater loneliness which Man, having made himself the ultimate stranger on his own planet, has doomed himself to carry into the silence of his final hour. (23)

The death of the fin whale radically changed Mowat’s life. He had to depart from Burgeo and from a community of people which had become dear to him. He had to accept and learn to live with the sure knowledge that he was a “member of the most lethal, murderous and un-natural species ever to run riot on earth” (23).

When there was a business run on the carcass of the whale someone addressed Mowat to be the keeper of the 'bloody thing'. Mowat rightly countered that stupid proposal saying, "That's where you're wrong. I was the keeper of a living whale. The corpse is Burgeo's. It belongs to Burgeo, and especially to those who had a hand in killing it. Let them look after it" (AWK 203). Then, no one dared to argue with him on that issue.

Even after several years, the incident grieved him to write about the whale, as he recollects:

She had been immense in life; now she was titanic, floating on her back, high out of the water so that the pallid mountain of her grossly swollen belly was like a capsized ship. From a being of
transcendental grace, she has been" transformed into a grotesque abomination. (RE 22)

When Onie, Claire and Mowat drifted beside that monstrous corpse, Claire was quietly crying. They were grateful for the distraction when the thumping of a big diesel engine announced the arrival of a tow boat from the fish plant. Ignoring them, it went directly to the whale. Its crew had handkerchiefs tied over their mouths and noses. They worked quickly to secure a loop of wire cable around the whale’s tail just forward of her mighty flukes. Then the boat, dwarfed to insignificance by its tow, put its stern down and white water foamed under its counter. Slowly and ponderously the whale began to move. The great fin whale that had been unable to pass that barrier alive, floated easily over it after death.

Mowat, in his continuing search for an explanation, cannot bring himself to make a blanket indictment of the whale's killers. The point is, the people who killed the whale had been infected with the virus of western civilization. They had left the out-port to work on ships plying the Great Lakes and many had lived for a while in the cities of Toronto and Hamilton and brought the virus with them. Those who fished Burgeo's waters in an unbroken chain over generations did not participate in the massacre. In an interview for Authors and Artists for Young Adults Mowat spoke about his purpose of writing this book:

It was not simply to depress everyone, including myself, but (to warn) that we must change our attitudes toward the species with
which we inhabit this earth. We must, in every sense, share the
planet with them, or we will become its ultimate destroyers….
The earth was once very different and much richer than it
presently is … We have a terrible tendency to assume that what
we see is what always was. Not so. We have a responsibility to
look back in anger and to use that anger to try to salvage the
present and ensure the future. (Gale 15)

A Whale for the Killing is proved to be Mowat’s strong defence of
wildlife. The town folk amused themselves by shooting at the helpless creature
with rifles. They made a sport tormenting the whale, firing bullets into her and
gashing her with speed boats. It was only with some distance from his pain that
Mowat was able to write Whale for the Killing, a symbolic tragedy. Even
though he was able to see the torture of the trapped whale as an outlet for the
frustration of the townspeople who trapped themselves by the progress of
industrialization, Mowat’s love of animals and embitterment with his fellow
human beings only deepened. So, in writing this book Mowat reserved his
harshest words for the government and for scientists, who reacted too slowly or
did not react at all to save the whale’s life. The Times Literary Supplement says
about this book:

Mr. Mowat has written a parable. This parable is an eloquent plea
to stop industrial plunder not merely of whales, which may result
soon in their extinction, but also of herring on which they feed
and the whole submarine kingdom which we are devastating, while we wrangle nationally about who can annihilate most first. (7)

In the name of Moby Joe, the whale of Mowat marks a continuity of the story of the whale initiated hilariously by Melville, from fancy of a parable height to the factual tragedy of ecological and human concern. Thus, the book marks the presence of whale as a memorable being in the consciousness of all. The fictional drama of Melville is shifted to a dramatic fiction bearing contemporary social and moral value. Dr. James Darling in his article "Gray Whales" opines:

No living animals have captured our imaginations as have the great whales ….They inspire our art, literature and music. The indescribable blend of grace, power, and beauty of whale as it glides under water, leaps towards the sky, or simply lifts its flukes and slides into the sea symbolizes a vanishing poetry of the wild. (par.5)

Whale, the largest aquatic mammal is itself a legend and the wonder of the creation. Many giant creatures have already vanished in the course of the progress of the evolutionary process of the world. But, these giant yet harmless archangels still struggle to survive. Mowat’s herculean effort and epical experience described in the book is an example of existential reality and ecological parable for the humanity.
A Whale for the Killing is a true tale of cruelty and courage in which Mowat’s real-life story is dramatized in order to make an urgent and eloquent voice for the sanctity of life on the planet. Man in civilization surveys and exploits the other creatures for their incompleteness and for their tragic fate of having taken form far below to the human. Humanity must realize that they are not underlings; rather they are ‘other nations’ that have equal rights to live on the same planet. The tragedy of the time is that human beings have failed to act on the alarms and warnings and, instead, have continued the assault on the other living beings.

Mowat's Sea of Slaughter is yet another warning to humanity regarding environmental protection and raising awareness of the decline and destruction of marine and coastal species. Mowat presents a chronicle of the accounts and evidences of the killings of mammals, birds and fishes in the North American region. The book has been divided into five parts focusing on sea birds, cats and dogs, fish, whales and sea tuskers respectively. Mowat paints a passionate and vibrant picture of what animal life in North America was like from 1500 to the present. Both the land and the water were filled with infinite number of the great auk, the white bear, the buffalo, the whales, the dolphins and the seals. The European intruders saw this great abundance of life as an opportunity for profit. To their eyes, the millions of whales seemed so many tons of oil. Hence, they went on slaughtering the animals with no thought of future. Mowat logically and systematically provides evidences of the wholesale slaughter by categories [land, sea, air] and species. Some of the first person accounts are
shocking and all the more deplorable and shameful. He acknowledges *Sea of Slaughter* as the most difficult book he has ever tried to write. In actual fact, being desperate after the war experience Mowat aspired to find “solace of a living world where birds still sang; where creatures large and small rustled through the forests; where great ones swam in the silence of the sea” (*SS* 1).

The book is an account of adventurous voyage too. In 1945 he was sailing in a ship that was carrying souvenirs for a war museum in Canada. He shared the company of the captain who was keenly interested in the animals inhabiting the ‘world of waters’, such as the whales or porpoises, similar to dolphins or sea birds. They passed the stately processions of fin whales and acknowledged them with due salutations. By the time they docked in Montreal, they had logged thirty-two kinds of sea birds and ten species of sea mammals together with creatures such as swordfish, giant jellyfish, and an enormous basking shark. To Mowat "it was a voyage out of darkness… into the light of life" (*SS* 2).

For three decades Mowat lived much of his time in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and along the Atlantic seaboard keeping his commitment to the creatures around. He settled with his wife in Newfoundland for several years, exploring the coasts and surrounding sea and watching the gleam of countless multitudes of fishes being brought aboard. In Magdalen Islands he became so familiar with the massive grey seals that he used to take sunbath with them on the same beach. He came to know the legions of harp seals on the ice pack of
the Gulf and off the northeast coast of Newfoundland. He visited the seal nurseries at both locations and witnessed the ‘red slaughter’ executed by the sealers. Gradually, in 1975 when his wife and he moved to Cape Breton, he observed that the sea was sounding a grave and warning note. He was affected by the uneasy impression that the memorable richness and diversity of animate life in the marine world and on its landward regions were deteriorating. There was a noticeable drop in the numbers of seals, seabirds, lobsters, whales, porpoises, foxes, otters, salmon and many other creatures. Initially he took it to be a passing cyclic phenomenon. But when he looked into his maritime notes of three decades, he confirmed his depressing apprehension that the apparent numbers of all the larger kinds of animals and the smaller ones had drastically reduced. Deeply worried he recollected the memories of fishermen and woodsmen. Their accounts confirmed that there had been a mass decline in the volume and diversity of non-human life that was still continuing. He noticed this intolerable depletion of animate life not only in the Atlantic seaboard but everywhere. Naturalists and scientists around the world reported a universal shrinking of non-human life at an accelerating speed. He decided to review the loss of natural life ever since European men started dominating the continent. He wanted to know what would be the condition of the ongoing existence of human and non-human life on this planet in future. Another tough question loomed in his mind was how to put an end to the slaughter of animate creation. To solve all his queries he needed a history of natural life on this continent since Western man put his mark upon it. When he found no chronicle of the
overall reduction of natural life, he undertook to present such a history by himself. So Mowat asserts,

I restricted my study to the region which I was most familiar, the northeastern Atlantic seaboard. This is a comparatively small portion of the earth's surface, but it had an incredibly natural history, and the destruction of its creature life reflects in miniature the history of the exploitation of such life throughout the entire domain of modern man, a domain that has now come to compass almost the entire surface of this planet. What happened in my chosen region is happening on every continent and in every ocean. (4)

Mowat's region of surveillance included the coasts, islands and adjoining seas of eastern North America. It was to this area the first European voyagers came and lit the way for others. By the year 1500, Portuguese, English, French and Basques had located and probed these places and set the phases of the still ongoing exploitation. Mowat addresses the history of this period as the history of exploitation and deals this theme from the standpoint of the victims of this awful period. He states that the human beings have spokesmen to argue and justify their cause whereas the other creatures have none. He has no apologies if he appears to be misanthropic in making himself an advocate of 'other creatures' that find perpetual place in his heart and soul. He wishes that the human beings change their attitude towards 'the other
species' so that the sea mammals have a chance of revitalization and survival in this world where lots of terrestrial mammals are at the verge of extinction. He is not just worried about animal extinctions, rather he is concerned with those species that still survive and suffer. It is true that Mowat has committed himself to the period of horrors in writing *Sea of Slaughter* but his mission is to make humanity realize the consequences of unchecked 'greed unleashed against animate creation'. He is such an ambitious veteran that he does not want to pay just lip service to environmental concerns. It is his constant plea that human beings should not become the eventual destroyer of the living world in which they are a part. For this reason, *Sea of Slaughter* is addressed as the masterpiece and his personal favourite book. With his unique story telling gift, he details why some creatures like the gentle penguin and the great auk have vanished forever. He stuns us with his account of the killing that continues. Monumental in scope, chilling in its impact *Sea of Slaughter* is a warning, a vision, and a powerful testament for preserving the living grandeur fast disappearing from this world.

Mowat speaks of a family of birds that bestrode the borders where oceans meet the land. The flightless auk or spear-bill was one of the first of man's victims he speaks about in the *Sea of Slaughter*. The Eskimo curlew was exterminated a century after the great auk had vanished. In fact, the story of extinction had effect from the time when the European man began his assault on avian life in North America.
The Atlantic history of eighteenth century is found replete with surprising account of early European visitors and their encounter with the exorbitant flocks of sea birds on the northeastern approaches to America. Mowat remembers, “In storm and calm, by day and night, in winter and summer, the oceanic birds formed islands of life upon the surface of the sea while others of their kinds filled the air above” (9).

Mowat never fails to express and elucidate the ecological co-existence of the natives with other creatures. Like The People of the Deer, the natives of New Foundland had gained a lot from the spearbills that contributed everything for their livelihood. The big birds provided the littoral dwellers of the western Atlantic seaboard with eggs and meat throughout the year. Greenland Inuit collected spearbill fat and stored it for winter needs in sacks made from the birds' own inflated gullets. Indians smoked or dried the meat to preserve it. The Beothuks, the last native inhabitants of New Foundland, ground the dried contents of spearbill eggs into a kind of flour from which they made winter puddings. Mowat wonders why humanity failed to hold an appreciable effect on the spearbill population that offered a vital source of sustenance to human generations. The early people were neither worried of eating nor faced any food shortage. Also, they never took more than what they needed. So when Europeans came, they could see the spearbill rookeries spread along the coasts from Labrador to Cape Cod. Mowat describes them as 'uncountable'.
Mowat confirms the ultimate fact that no large mammal species has stayed alive without the mercy of human beings. To put it in other words, every large mammalian species in the eastern part of North America has been destroyed by modern man without any consideration for the lives of 'other beings'. Meat, hides and fur have been the immediate rewards of the slaughter of these creatures. It is extremely unbearable to observe that the slaughter has been looked upon as a recreation for mankind. The white bear with a weight of one thousand two hundred pounds and a length of up to eleven feet has been one of the largest terrestrial carnivores comfortably living only in perpetually frozen areas of ice and snow. The author again attacks the Judeo-Christian culture that had a belief that all large carnivores were intrinsically savage and ferocious ones and they deserved to be destroyed. These bears had superbly co-existed with aboriginal mankind but they could not do so with the new human intruders. Fed up with eating fish, the European fishermen developed a lust for red meat and so the white water bear became an immediate victim. Hunters took pride and treated killing white bear an adventure.

If truth be told, the white bears contributed to the existence of any species of seals just like the wolves contributed to the existence of caribou. Not only that, the white bears co-existed with at least six hundred Innuits and large number of Nascopie Indians but co-existence with Europeans seemed and proved to be a different proposition. During the first decade of the seventeenth century Europeans were in search of oil and they began pushing their whaling ships northward. Besides killing whales, walrus and seals for oil, the whalers
and sealers came to know that a big water bear could render nearly twelve
gallons of oil. Their shaggy pelts commanded high price from the Europeans
who coveted them for their castle. So the irrational slaughter commenced by
the early nineteenth century with the introduction of new and deadlier guns.
The Inuit were provided with guns that turned them into bear hunters.
Moreover, the Inuit were reduced in number as a result of the diseases
acquired from the whalers. Mowat is alarmed by the statistic report of the
slaughter. In 1906, the crew of a Norwegian vessel killed two hundred ninety
six ice bears in a single summer. During the fishing season of 1909-1910
British whalers butchered four hundred and seventy six bears. The figure of
killing by the US from the aircraft on the ice packs of Alaska was about one
thousand. Greedy Europeans took it for granted that whenever they came
across such creatures they treated them as theirs either by means of science or
for sport. Mowat is surprised by the custom of the Arctic explorers and
travelers who killed the Polar bears without caring for their carcasses. The
Arctic expeditions caused not only the reduction of large animals but also
brought starvation and death of some Inuit bands. Though U.S, Soviet Union
and Norway banned polar bear killing in 1972, Canada and Greenland
continued to do it as fur trade reached its peak. Mowat is all praise for Soviet
Union because in the Soviet Union the bear population increased so
dramatically that it may be approaching aboriginal levels in some places.

Like the brown bear, the black bear too faced the same treatment and
end. The Eskimos aimed the animals for their skins only when they had a
favourable chance to kill them. Otherwise, they let them free out of respect for its ferocity and size. But, wherever wild grizzly populations existed, they were subjected to sport and commercial hunting. Government also had designed programmes to pacify the human hunters of wild animals. Settlers and colonists slaughtered bears not simply for meat, fat, and fur alone. They saw the animals as a threat to agriculture too. Successful bear hunters enjoyed great prestige. They were viewed as saviours of the settlements. Mowat wonders, “When the last black bears have gone the route of their white and brown cousins, what will the sportsmen turn to then, poor things?” (108).

North eastern America once had a family of musk bearers. The small animals were called so because most of them had musk producing scent glands. The musk family included marten, fisher, ermine, otter, wolverine, and mink. They were valued for their dense, short-haired fur that provided the traders with a sustaining source. The small islands which were named after these mammals have become meaningless, for example Mink Island.

According to Mowat, the first source of wealth to be exploited by Europeans in the northeastern reaches of the New World was oil. The next item was, of course, fish. The third item was not fur as there was another material of commerce by the hide of large mammals that provided leather. North American buffalo, a dominant large herbivore of the Atlantic seaboard was the immediate victim of European invasion. The Portuguese, the French, and the English were challenging each other in targeting this enormous creature for its hide.
Mass slaughter of buffalos contributed to the mass production of buffalo-hide products ranging from machinery belting to policeman's coats. The author calls the butchery "an insatiable lust for booty . . . and for blood" (129).

Twentieth century whalers turned the New World waters red with blood. Although porpoises and dolphins are all members of the whale family, the word 'whale' had a great account in earlier times as the term designated the sea giants that were turned to massive commercial value. Environmentalists have expressed their deep concern for the lives of whales against oil and gas exploration in Arctic waters where an accident of a blowout of well or a tanker is more than a possibility. Some whales like rorqual were termed as "the worser-sort" as they were too swift and impossible to be caught. Whether they are better-sort or worser-sort, they made the north western waters of the Atlantic Ocean truly deserve the name "Sea of Whales" (258). The harbour porpoises preferred inshore waters where they were familiar to native tribes who hunted them for food. This co-existence was prevailing with the Atlantic littoral through unnumbered centuries until the little whales fell into the calculating eye of commerce. In his utter dismay Mowat says:

Although the outright kill by mankind has been much reduced, it appears that we are now attacking them indirectly and unintentionally through massive pollution of the seas. Extremely high concentrations of toxic chemicals have been found in the
bodies of harbour porpoises (little whales) and this affliction would be worsening with time. (260)

Mowat is deeply distressed of the manner how killing was executed. Individual whales were stabbed scores of times using knives lashed to sticks. Completely immobilized by their own weight, the unfortunate victims flexed their flukes in agony as cutting spades sliced through their flesh. What was even worse was the practice of holding live whales on the beach. The surplus animals were even preserved alive. It was a casual sight to the butchers to see them dying inch by inch. Such acts were rationalized in 'advanced' nations on the basis of economic determinism. Thus the human greed against animate creations resulted in the destruction of the whale nations one by one according to its monetary worth. When the whale communities were reduced to the point of extermination and as no more mammalian substitutes were found, the commercial men were forced to switch to the sea of fish.

The whales and the finfeet had made the seas their homes. The finfeet were composed of seals, walrus and some other swimmers whose hind feet modified into fins or flippers. Because of their familiarity with the terrestrial world, people named them: sea horse, sea cow, sea wolf, sea elephant, sea lions and the like. All these species became "grist to the mill of human greed"(320) when Europeans took over the northeastern seaboard. Year by year the slaughter mounted toward the inevitable conclusion.
Mowat casts his attention on the fate of the ordinary men who is thrown to eternal suffering caused by the greed of modern man. While there are a number of daring records on the butchery of sea animals, nobody kept any records of the consequent loss of life among the native peoples of northern coasts. Although the slaughter rewarded the mercantile aristocrats with enormous wealth, it had returned little to the ordinary men. Thousands of them even got perished along with the millions of ice seals during the carnage. Mowat mourns: “Now, it seemed, the time had come for the dead to bury the dead; time for the great dying of men and seals to become no more than a memory of an earlier and darker time, when human rapacity had known no bounds” (344).

After presenting the dark and bloody chronicles, Mowat once dreams of the Atlantic waters in its aboriginal status beaming with spouting pod of whales, tides of fishes, clouded by wheeling multitudes of gannets, clustered with resting seals, flickered with restless drift of shore birds and eider ducks, and engaged by all sea lives. But the vision fails when he is thrown to witness nothing but the vast expanse of sky and sea and fringing land emptied of those majestic creatures. He beholds the world as it is now and he craves for the days lost.

When men commenced their exploitation, they believed that the animate resources of the New World were infinite and inexhaustible. The helplessness of that living structure was beyond their comprehension and they were rather
ignorant of the inevitable consequences. The author calls for a change of attitudes towards other animate creations subjected to frightful destruction. It should be a new desire to reassert our indivisibility with life and make amends for the havoc. Mowat puts forward a proposition: “If we persevere we may succeed in making the human race humane... at last. And then the Sea of Slaughter may again become a Sea of Life” (384).

Both *A Whale for the Killing* and *Sea of Slaughter* bear complementary and meaning associated words as titles of two of Mowat’s popular narratives. Both the whale and the sea symbolize grandeur of natural formations. As a matter of fact, they represent the major occupant of the earth physically. But the words like ‘killing’ and ‘slaughter’ make their existence mean feebly ironical. Moby Joe, the whale is dramatically represented as a tragic protagonist and a single dominant character. However, that does not bring reversal into the ecocritical aquatic drama. It opens up the curtain of endless misery of countless such aquatic creatures in *Sea of Slaughter*. So, both the narratives seem to be connected as documentaries of dissipation. The whales and other sea mammals cease to be the victim of human sport and consumerism losing their natural ecological importance. Out of deep concern Mowat raises his voice through his narratives and draws the attention of the world in order to preserve the remaining incredible aquatic archangels.