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of the University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna,
Medical University of Vienna and University of Vienna

Unit of Ethics and Human-Animal Studies
(Head: Univ.-Prof. Dr. Herwig Grimm)

Denying animals to be subjects: the case of objectification of animals used for meat production

A philosophical analysis of a psychological phenomenon

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Submitted by

DI Marie-Theres Schlemmer

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A philosophical analysis of a psychological phenomenon

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Author:
DI Marie-Theres Schlemmer

Supervisor:
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Herwig Grimm
Co-Supervisor:
Dr.phil. Judith Benz-Schwarzburg
Reviewer:
Ao. Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Gabriela Kompatscher-Gufler

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Contents

"This arbitrariness, this apparent lack of coherence in our attitudes and behavior toward animals, perhaps reflects a fundamental conflict of interests. Viewing animals as unconscious, Cartesian automata places them in the same morally neutral space as objects or inanimate entities that can be used or abused with virtual impunity. But if we regard animals as unfeeling and uncaring objects, then their apparent interest in us – their affection and companionship must be just an illusion, an epiphenomenon that has no real social or emotional value. Conversely, if we truly regard animals as equivalent to friends and family, we cannot expect to be able to exploit them harmfully without experiencing moral anxiety in the process.

We are, in effect, trapped between the proverbial rock and a hard place. If we place animals beyond the pale of moral consideration, we can harvest their economic and instrumental benefits with a clear conscience, but we cannot simultaneously claim that these animals are members of our families, the subjects of profound emotional attachments, or sentient and cognitively sophisticated beings worthy of special treatment and protection. So, our solution to this dilemma seems to be to compartmentalize – to allocate our moral obligations to some animals but not others – and to invent elaborate belief systems and 'just-so stories' to explain why animals do not actually matter even when our gut instincts, our moral intuitions, tell us that they do".

James A. Serpell (2009)

Chapter 1

Introduction

Even though the lives of humans and animals have been connected in many different ways throughout history, it is only recently that a particular scholarly focus has been put on the interaction between humans and animals (Ritvo, 2007, p. 119).[1] In former times, research in this field mostly dealt with the animal as a research object to compare him/her[2] to and separate him/her from the human being, but today the interest of this new branch of human-animal studies lies in the reciprocal relationship between animals and humans and the role of animals in society (Amiot & Bastian, 2014, p. 1). Human-animal studies have a broad scope (Herzog, 2011[2010], p. 35) and combine input from several different academic disciplines, especially the humanities and social sciences (Ritvo, 2007, p. 119; Kurth et al., 2016, pp. 9–10), in order to capture "the links and the dynamic interplay between humans and animals" (Amiot & Bastian, 2014, p. 1).

This so-called 'animal turn' becomes apparent by the growing number of books, journals, and articles about this topic as well as by newly emerging conferences (Ritvo, 2007, p. 119; Weil, 2010, p. 1). Since animals are ubiquitously present in the daily life of humans in many different ways (e.g. as companions, as assistants, as food, as research objects, as entertainers, as hunting targets, as provider of several raw materials, as pest controllers, for hobbies, etc.; Stibbe, 2001, p. 148; Steiger, 2002, p. 221; Knight et al., 2004, p. 43; Serpell, 2009, p. 633; Petrus, 2013, p. 45; Bramble & Fischer, 2016, p. 1;

[1] Throughout this thesis the term 'animal' will be used instead of the more accurate term 'non-human animal' for reasons of better legibility, although I am fully aware that this term carries the risk of blurring the fact that humans are animals as well and might construct an artificial distance between 'us and them', as pointed out by Fitzgerald (2015, p. xvii).

[2] Even though it is rather unusual to use the pronouns 'he' and 'she' rather than 'it' when writing about animals (except for individually known animals, e.g. pet animals or animal film stars), I will follow a more 'personal' language. Following Adams (2010[1990], p. 93), talking about animals as if they were mere things does not seem right to me, especially in the light of this work.

Grimm, 2016, pp. 43–44) and the human-animal interaction has implications for both sides, it is important to focus on it (Amiot & Bastian, 2014, p. 30).

Clearly, however, humans' interaction with animals is not limited to live animals but also includes the relationship with dead ones. This is especially true when it comes to the issue of meat, which is – within this work – understood as the complex whole of production and consumption of animal meat. Therefore, this work will contribute to this aspect of the human-animal interaction by analysing peoples' relation to animals used for meat production[3] and their meat products.

1.1 Animals as meat?

"Meat is defined as the flesh of animals used as food" including musculature, organs, and other edible tissues (Lawrie, 1991[1966], p. 1). The fact that meat production is a current issue can be seen by the large amount of meat produced and consumed. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in 2010 295 million tonnes were produced worldwide (FAO, 2016, s.p.) with every person consuming 42.2 kg of meat per year on average (FAO, 2015, s.p.). This marks a drastic increase as production levels reached only 71.4 million tonnes worldwide about 50 years prior (FAO, 2016, s.p.), meaning that per capita consumption was only 23.1 kg in 1961 (FAO, 2015, s.p.). Hence, the consumption of meat has been rising continuously. Against the background of an ever-growing world population, this trend should be a wake-up call in more the only one respect: not only does the complex phenomenon of meat production have large impacts on ecological issues (e.g. sustainability of production, waste management) and social issues (e.g. future world food supply, working conditions of slaughterhouse workers), as extensively described in literature (DeGrazia, 1996, p. 286; DeGrazia, 2002, p. 75; Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 16; Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 73–93; Tischler, 2010, p. 10; Francione & Charlton, 2013, pp. 11–14; Fitzgerald, 2015, p. xiv; Dirscherl, 2015, pp. 319–320), but it also affects the animals as such. Even though only a few species are used by humans (Lawrie, 1991[1966], p. 1; Grimm et al., 2016, p. 81), this concerns an immense number of individual animals (Grimm, 2012, p. 276) which is hard to conceptualise (Fitzgerald, 2015, p. xii). Humans have been keeping animals for nutritional purposes as long as 10 000 years (Grimm et al., 2016, p. 81) and domesticated animals still represent an unparalleled

[3]Throughout this thesis the term 'animal used for meat production' will be used instead of 'meat-bearing animal', even if this may sound kind of cumbersome. This is done in dependence on the critique formulated by Adams (2010[1990], p. 98), that 'meat-bearing animal' is in fact "a misnomer, as though the meat is not the animal herself, as though the meat can be separated from the animal and the animal would still remain". The same argument is true for 'meat-producing animal' and hence also this term will be avoided.

resource for humans (Wilkie, 2005, p. 213). Nowadays, the bigger part of these animals is used for agricultural purposes (Grimm, 2012, p. 276). The most common use of these animals is their use as food for humans (Ibrahim, 2007, p. 113; Fitzgerald, 2015, p. xi) and concerning the zoomass of domesticated animals the ones kept for the production of dairy and meat represent the dominant class of the earth's vertebrates (Smil, 2002, p. 618). Because of the diverse but manifold consequences of today's meat production, this topic has not only become of more and more societal interest (Dirscherl, 2015, pp. 315–316; Trummer, 2015, p. 63), but has also become a recognised ethical working field within the last decades (e.g. Singer, 2009[1975]; Regan, 2004[1983]; DeGrazia, 1996). As Gottwald (2015, p. 142) emphasises, there is a current need to tackle the urgent ethical questions bound to human nutrition, especially in terms of animal ethics.

Even though meat production and consumption and its consequences are a global phenomenon, within this thesis, the focus will be put on the (cultural) context of Western industrialised countries for several different reasons. First of all, these countries show more similarities in meat production systems than other countries worldwide.[4] Secondly, in these countries meat plays a central role in peoples' consumption patterns (Holm & Møhl, 2000, p. 277; Loughnan et al., 2012, p. 15) as can be seen in data provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: while the average individual in Europe alone eats up to 83.4 kg of meat per year, meat consumption in the least developed countries on earth lies at about 13.7 kg per person and year (data from the year 2010; FAO, 2015, s.p.). Thirdly, the necessity of meat consumption (especially at the current level) in all these countries is highly questionable since people in these countries usually can make use of enough food sources other than animal meat in order to survive (DeGrazia, 1996, p. 284). The content of this thesis therefore deals with Western industrialised countries, its people, and the most intensively used animals in the meat production systems in these parts of the world (i.e. cattle, pigs, poultry), except when explicitly stated otherwise.

Generally speaking, industrial animal agriculture in Western industrialised countries, including meat production, is an immensely profitable and powerful industry (Fitzgerald, 2015, p. xii) with a great interest in output and profit maximization as well as cost reduction (DeGrazia, 2002, p. 71; D'Silva, 2006, p. 53; Longo & Malone, 2006, p. 114; Huth, 2013b, p. 268; Fitzgerald, 2015, p. 21; Grimm, 2016, p. 44). Industrialisation of animal agriculture can partly explain the present mode of meat production and the amount of meat consumed in Western countries: while people originally scavenged and

[4]Fitzgerald (2015) gives a good overview of the issue of meat in Western industrialised countries and the corresponding current practice of meat production.

hunted for meat and tried to nurture themselves and their families by means of subsistence farming, industrialisation enabled people to produce larger amounts of agricultural goods than needed for the own survival and to sell them for profit (Fitzgerald, 2015, p. xiii). As a consequence, they wanted to produce more and more to make more profit and the animals kept for meat production became valued as commodities (Fitzgerald, 2015, p. xiii). In modern agriculture today, commodification as the process of only considering such attributes of an individual important if they are bought or sold (Radin, 1991, pp. 345–346) becomes even more noticeable (Longo & Malone, 2006, p. 114). Industrial animal husbandry is heavily dictated by strong economic forces (Grimm, 2012, p. 276). It rather 'produces' than raises the animals it makes use of (Fitzgerald, 2015, p. 9) and appears to view the animals' characteristics to be mere disturbing factors in the process (Grimm, 2016, p. 54). In these terms, successfully producing meat on a mass scale (Longo & Malone, 2006, p. 114) involves intensive conditions that usually pose serious threats to the health and welfare of the animals (Steiger, 2002, p. 221; D'Silva, 2006, pp. 53, 56; Longo & Malone, 2006, p. 114). As it is often more cost-efficient to produce on a large scale and to readily discard animals that do not perform at the required level (e.g. because of health issues) than to adequately treat them, animal welfare seen as a barrier to economic production is often severely neglected (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 39). In the course of the gradual intensification process of meat production within the last decades to meet the high market demand for cheap meat, the animals have continuously been adapted to 'fit' the production system in the effort to turn them into undemanding factors of production (Gottwald, 2015, p. 129) rather than modifying the system according to the animals' needs (Dirscherl, 2015, p. 323; Gottwald, 2015, p. 141). Hence, while the number of animals used for meat production is increasing, "their quality of life is arguably diminishing" (Fitzgerald, 2015, p. 110). Depending on the country and the species used there are of course differences in the housing systems, the (invasive) interventions, the slaughter process, etc., but what all these systems have in common is that they are shaped by the goal of efficient production (Ibrahim, 2007, p. 103) and hence all of them put enormous strain on the animals kept for these purposes.

Certainly, more extensive forms of agricultural production (e.g. free-ranging systems) exist. They, however, do not necessarily provide animals with conditions that positively influence their welfare and represent only a very small proportion of commercial animal husbandry, not being able to alone make up for production levels as high as today. Such alternate modes of production are more the exception than the rule; therefore, the focus is put on the common intensive production systems in the Western industrialised world.

Especially in Western industrialised countries, the consumption of meat in itself is regarded an important part of culture and tradition and usually remains an unquestioned part of everyday life Holm & Møhl, 2000, p. 277; Loughnan et al., 2012, p. 15) as "there are few things that we take for granted as much as what we eat" (Fitzgerald, 2015, p. xi). Deeply embedded symbolic meanings and social values are attached to meat (e.g. prosperity, prestige, lifestyle, masculinity, physical strength) and the desire for meat is to large parts related to culture (Allen, 2000, p. 405; Smil, 2002, p. 599; Fitzgerald, 2015, pp. 66–67; Trummer, 2015, p. 66). Allen (2000, p. 405) even proposes that, "the prominence of meat in the food system seems greater than its nutritional value". In a study about the eating habits of the French, for example, the interviewees mentioned several cultural factors and declared meat eating (at least once daily) an integral part of their culture (Ngapo et al., 2003, p. 130).

Socialisation and culture determine what is to be viewed as 'right' and 'wrong', thereby establishing social norms according to which people belonging to a certain society and culture then behave. Hence, peoples' perception, understanding, and treatment of (different) animals are largely pre-defined (Amiot & Bastian, 2014, p. 19; see also Stewart & Cole, 2009; Joy, 2011[2010]), leaving their actions towards them (e.g. petting, eating) mostly without any reflection (Petrus, 2013, p. 56; Fitzgerald, 2015, p. xi). This socialisation process – starting from very childhood on (Lemke, 2015, p. 53) – of course also affects meat-eating habits, including the amount, kind, and image of meat regularly eaten (Fitzgerald, 2015, pp. 65–75). Such culturally loaded nutritional customs develop over centuries creating continued and hardened patterns which cannot easily be resolved, which is especially true for foods enjoying high social prestige (Trummer, 2015, pp. 66–67), as is the case with meat, which is also in most cultures recognised as a symbol of wealth (Herzog, 2011[2010], p. 176). Therefore, meat eating can be seen as a socially normative behaviour (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 254), that depending on the relevant culture and society can take different forms at different times (Trummer, 2015, p. 65). Depending on the cultures in question, one and the same food can be rated totally differently (Trummer, 2015, p. 65). For example, cows are readily eaten in Austria, whereas in India they are viewed to be holy animals and hence are not used for consumption. On the one hand, people identify themselves with their culture and accordingly, values attached to certain foods are an inherent part of their identity (Trummer, 2015, pp. 65–67). On the other hand, eating behaviour itself – especially meat consumption – is an important part in establishing one's own identity and is therefore not only determined by cultural influences (Trummer, 2015, p. 70). Thus, nutritional habits oscillate between society and individuality (Trummer, 2015, pp. 71–72).

Furthermore, a culture-dependent categorisation of animals as belonging to different classes, such as pets, edible animals, and pests, is deeply embedded in socialisation (Stewart & Cole, 2009, p. 458; Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 23–28; Rose, 2015, p. 237) and can differ between cultures (Herzog, 2011[2010], p. 49). Usually people act towards animals according to this categorisation: pets are there to be cared for, agricultural animals are there to be eaten (Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 11–16).

However, this depicts a rather ambivalent attitude of humans towards animals. While people love animals, spend lots of money for the well-being of their pets and are concerned about animal welfare, they at the same time do support certain forms of animal use and do not seem to have a problem with letting animals die for the consumption of their meat (Plous, 1993, p. 14; Loughnan et al., 2012, p. 15; Loughnan et al., 2014, p. 104; Veilleux, 2014, p. 2; Gottwald, 2015, p. 130). Nonetheless, even though most people do not question the role of agricultural animals – kept in order to be killed (Huth, 2013b, p. 268) – there is an increasing awareness for animal welfare (especially in the EU since the mid 20th century; Hoogland et al., 2005, p. 16; European Commission, 2007, pp. 4–5; Loughnan et al., 2012, p. 15; Schleißing & Grimm, 2012, p. 84) which indicates their generally caring attitude towards (most) animals (Loughnan et al., 2010, p. 156). Since this is not only true for welfare in general (as depicted by the rising number of topic-related organisations within the last years, which are joined by more and more members; Amiot & Bastian, 2014, p. 2) but also especially in connection to dietary choices (Rollin, 2004, p. 5; Bilewicz et al., 2011, p. 201; Grimm, 2012, p. 278; Dirscherl, 2015, pp. 315–316; Fitzgerald, 2015, pp. 109, 115), it becomes obvious that this ambivalent relationship is not only the case between such categories (as pets and agricultural animals), but can even be observed within such an animal category.

When once in a while one animal leaves his/her role as agricultural animal used for meat production, lots of people become solidly united with this single individual animal. This was, for example, the case in Germany a few years ago when cow Bavaria escaped the slaughterhouse and made her way through the city of Munich garnering medial interest (Joos, 2014, s.p.; Kurth, 2016, pp. 192–193). Ironically, it was only after Bavaria was finally shot on her flight that people were outraged about her death. This indicates that these socially determined animal categories are not as fixed and clear as they seem to be.

That peoples' behaviour concerning the issue of meat conflicts with their sympathy to and empathy with animals shows that they have sort of a moral intuition against the unquestioned use of animals and that a moral common sense about the treatment of animals as ethically considerable entities exists (Grimm, 2012, p. 278). This discrepancy

between the use of animals and the caring attitude towards them is what philosopher Francione (2004, p. 108) terms 'moral schizophrenia'.[5]

1.2 The issue of meat – where psychology and philosophy connect

As a consequence of the just described ambivalent relationship towards animals, people experience a certain kind of discomfort because they feel that their actions are not in line with their (moral) beliefs (Loughnan et al., 2012, p. 16). It is this oscillation between two polar opposites, as Lüscher (2009, p. 44) defines ambivalence, which makes people feel uncomfortable. In the case of meat consumption, people wanting to escape this unease make use of different psychological strategies (e.g. denying animals certain characteristics, objectifying or deindividualising them, placing them in arbitrary categories) which then function as cognitive approval for a behaviour which might otherwise be perceived as morally problematic (Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 18, 117; Loughnan et al., 2010, p. 156). Psychological mechanisms therefore are able to explain how people deal with the phenomenon of meat eating, but philosophy and ethics are needed to identify why this behaviour could be seen as problematic.

Hence, not only psychological strategies and mechanisms are relevant in explaining peoples' everyday treatment of (different) animals, but ethical considerations also come into play. This shows that psychological and ethical approaches become interwoven to make this ambivalent relationship between humans (i.e. producers as well as consumers) and animals a worthwhile field to be investigated as part of the human-animal studies. On the one hand, psychology as the academic discipline of investigating biological processes, mental functions, and behaviours, and consequently, understanding the behaviour of individuals and groups, describes humans' attitudes towards animals and explains their behaviour towards them (Mischel, 2015, s.p.). On the other hand, philosophy as the academic discipline of striving towards an understanding of truth, the essence of life, and the position of the human in the world (Bertelsmann, 2005, p. 741) and more specifically ethics (as a branch of philosophy) dealing with the concepts of right and wrong (Singer, 2015, s.p.), try to explain and establish norms for the treatment and ethical consideration of other beings. As the psychologists Loughnan et al. (2012, p. 15) state: "The relationship between people and animals is morally complex. This complexity stems from our

[5]Even though this discrepancy relates to all kinds of human use of animals (e.g. in laboratories, for entertainment, etc.), the focus of this work is put on the issue of meat.

ambivalent treatment of animals and is nowhere better captured than in the consumption of meat".

1.3 Rationale and hypothesis of this work

Based on the close interconnection between these two disciplines, a psychological as well as a philosophical approach will be employed to shed light on humans' relationship with animals used for meat production. Within this work this will be done by analysing the link between psychological strategies and the philosophical concept of objectification concerning the issue of meat.

Objectification is defined as "a way of speaking, thinking, and acting" (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 249) that turns a living being into an object.[6] As soon as a living being, in this case an animal used for meat production, is perceived as an object, any moral obligations towards him/her will seemingly become obsolete as objects do not have to be given moral consideration; slaughtering and eating another living being in particular is then no longer morally questionable. However, this begs the question whether objectification is used as a rather easy, superficial possibility for dealing with the above-described discomfort (serving as a distancing excuse for humans' own behaviour and obscuring the actual ethical questions that are connected to meat production and consumption) as well as whether objectification is in itself an ethically problematic act.

Not only do some empirical studies show that psychological strategies do have parallels to acts of objectification (i.e. some aspects of denial; e.g. Loughnan et al., 2010; Bilewicz et al., 2011; Bastian et al., 2012) and is the mechanism of objectification itself described in psychological theory (e.g. Joy, 2011[2010]), but also is objectification known as a concept in philosophy (e.g. Nussbaum, 1995); this is why I decided to use it when bridging psychology and philosophy in the context of the relationship between humans and animals used for meat production and to investigate whether the core of objectification is denial.

Against the background of a known use of psychological strategies including some aspects of denial concerning an animal's characteristics to overcome the discomfort evoked by meat consumption, the thesis covers two main topics, reflected in the two-fold hypothesis:

[6] As objectification will be at the centre of this thesis, a more detailed analysis of this term will follow in chapter 3.1. For a first introduction into the topic, this definition, however, should suffice right now.

(1) Following the psychological concept of the meat paradox, the essence of objectification of animals used for meat production can be described as a denial.

(2) With the help of philosophical theory the components of denial common in objectifying practices towards animals used for meat production can be uncovered and the ethical content of denial can be clarified. The moral problems relating to such a denial can be elaborated within the framework of an animal rights theory.

1.4 Method and structure of this work

Since the disciplines of psychology and philosophy have been relatively unconnected regarding the topic of animal objectification until now, within this thesis the effort is made to bridge this gap. This should be achieved by identifying elements of psychological data and concepts which are of ethical relevance and by linking them to corresponding philosophical theories. It is therefore necessary to analyse the ethical content of actions of objectification with the help of philosophical concepts and to look for normative implications that are tied to this practice; in the present work this will be done following an animal rights approach. The psychological theory connected to the meat paradox will thereby mainly be reconstructed in order to serve as a basis for ethical considerations. The emphasis on the thesis, however, will be put on the philosophical examination of animal objectification.

In a first step a psychological background of the humans' ambivalent behaviour of meat eating will be given (see chapter 2). It includes a more theoretical psychological investigation of the topic (see chapters 2.1 and 2.2) as well as empirical data (see chapter 2.3) and theoretical outlines (see chapter 2.4) on several different psychological strategies of dealing with this ambivalence. This will unveil connecting factors to ethical questions.

In a second step one of these mechanisms, namely 'objectification', will be analysed in more detail from a philosophical point of view in order to examine its normative meaning regarding the issue of meat (see chapter 3). A good starting point for this analysis is the theoretical concept of the objectification of women in the context of sexuality and pornography by Martha Nussbaum (1995) because it contains possible signposts of objectification (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257; see chapter 3.1). Parallels between these signposts and objectifying acts towards animals common in meat production will be worked out (see chapters 3.1.2 to 3.1.6). To draw normative conclusions from the before outlined and to prove the hypothesis of this work whether objectification of animals in the course of meat production is ethically reprehensible from an animal rights perspective, the theory

of Tom Regan (2004[1983]) will be employed (see chapter 3.2). By doing so, philosophical arguments should highlight the ethically relevant components of objectification as a psychological strategy and ethical grounds should be found on which philosophical norms the issue of meat can be based upon. As philosophy and ethics deal with the question about the discrepancy between the 'is' and the 'ought' in human life, it is important to address humans' treatment of animals used for meat production under both these aspects. Therefore, chapter 3 will not only provide actual examples of the objectification taking place in current husbandry practice (i.e. the 'is-status'; see chapter 3.1), but will also give normative conclusions drawn when illuminated from an ethical perspective (i.e. the 'ought-status'; see chapter 3.2).

A discussion at the end of this thesis (see chapter 4) will finally complete the analysis of animal objectification regarding the issue of meat by summarising its findings (see chapter 4.1), critically reflecting upon the chosen philosophical approach (see chapter 4.2), and presenting some final thoughts (see chapter 4.3).

Chapter 2

A psychological view on the issue of meat

To investigate the ambivalent behaviour of caring and eating, which people display towards animals, and its resulting ethical consequences – a field which is of relatively new scientific interest (Grimm & Hartnack, 2013, p. 371) – it is important to explore the psychological facts and background of meat eating before philosophical concepts can be applied to the topic. Not only are many psychological factors important in humans' use of animals in general and therefore interesting to investigate (Plous, 1993, p. 43), but they do also obtain a key role in food demand as food is of great symbolic relevance in human societies (Dietz et al., 1995, p. 534). Therefore, this chapter will introduce the so-called 'meat paradox' (see chapter 2.1) which will be described as a special example within Leon Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theory (see chapter 2.2). Psychologically exploring the meat paradox is especially promising because a clear link between basic psychological processes and daily moral actions (even though usually not recognised as such) can be observed (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 247). Furthermore, in this chapter the most important findings of some empirical psychological research on the meat paradox (see chapter 2.3) and common strategies and mechanisms to deal with it will be presented as well as the more theoretical psychological framework concerning the issue of meat as such, namely 'carnism' (see chapter 2.4), which was developed by Melanie Joy (2011[2010]). Before illuminating the philosophical aspects of the meat paradox a short summary of the psychological findings will be given (see chapter 2.5).

2.1 The meat paradox

Although human beings show a notable flexibility with regard to their nutrition most of them engage in an omnivorous diet (Ruby & Heine, 2012, p. 47) and view meat as an essential part of the diet tightly connected to their cultural identity (Holm & Møhl, 2000, p. 277; Loughnan et al., 2012, p. 15). Unlike its former status as a luxury item (because of seasonal fluctuations in provision or scarcity, especially in times of famine), meat has become a readily available good in Western industrialised countries, comparatively available for quite cheap prices (Lemke, 2015, p. 50; Trummer, 2015, p. 69). Meat is often praised for its taste and the fact that meat usually acts as the center of meals shows the importance of meat in the Western diet (Holm & Møhl, 2000, pp. 277, 278). Despite this sacred and powerful role of meat, meat also represents a food people seem to be more concerned about than about other food items (Holm & Kildevang, 1996, p. 5). This can be traced back to different factors, like concerns about modern production and processing, health aspects, and the animal origin of meat Holm and Møhl (2000, p. 278), and such ambivalence to meat is often aggravated by news reports about food scandals (Berndsen & van der Plight, 2004, p. 71) or epidemics, like foot-and-mouth disease (Hardeman & Jochemsen, 2012, p. 658). As one of the most valued foods meat is at the same time seen as the most defiling food (Holm & Møhl, 2000, p. 277) and frequently tabooed, which thus creates a paradoxical image of this aliment (Fessler & Navarrete, 2003, p. 6).

Not only the image of meat is paradoxical, but so are the actions of meat consumers, which are depicted by the meat paradox. The meat paradox describes the tension of loving animals and at the same time loving meat and characterises an ambivalent relationship between humans and animals (Loughnan et al., 2010, p. 156; Loughnan et al., 2012, p. 15).[7] It is this phenomenon of petting the dog lying under the table while putting a knife into the cow lying on the table which illustrates the ambivalence defined as the meat paradox.[8] As such it focuses on the meat-eating behaviour of individuals and hence mainly on the consumers; however, as the issue of meat is to be seen as a complex whole, the ambivalence towards animals affects meat producers likewise (see chapter 3.1).

[7]The term 'meat' paradox is in some way, however, disturbing. Whereas it describes the ambivalence of the humans' attitudes and actions towards animals, which is the actual paradox about it, its name only refers to the animal product, i.e. the meat. This puts a strong focus on the issue of meat and shows its importance in society.

[8]Grimm and Hartnack (2013, p. 371) illustrate this quirky matter with the behaviour of a well-known figure from literature: the hero Obelix from the famous French comic series "Asterix and Obelix" thoroughly enjoys eating wild boars, while showering his little pet dog friend Idefix with all his love and hence is a vivid example for what is scientifically called the 'meat paradox'.

Against the background of a commonly benevolent manner towards animals, it is obvious that most people experience some kind of discomfort when they become aware of the fact that animals used for meat do not only have to die for their gustatory pleasures but also experience systemic and needless suffering during their lifetime (Jepson, 2008, p. 144; Prunty & Apple, 2013, pp. 268–269). As this discomfort can be described as a form of cognitive dissonance, it will be helpful to take a closer look at Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theory.

2.2 Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance

Festinger was an American social psychologist who developed and empirically proved the theory of cognitive dissonance, a very influential theory in social psychology (Hogg & Vaughan, 2011[1995], p. 215) which was followed by numerous studies (Harmon-Jones & Mills, 1999, p. 3). Even though over the years Festinger's (1957) theory was partly revised by the findings of psychological research and alternative accounts were generated (Harmon-Jones & Mills, 1999, pp. 10–15), the theory is still valid and of interest in psychology today (Harmon-Jones, 2012, p. 543). It was stated very generally in abstract terms (Harmon-Jones & Mills, 1999, p. 5) and Festinger (1957, pp. 275–276) himself explained that despite its simplicity the theory has wide implications for a variety of different situations. Hence, it can also be employed to explore the meat paradox and its resulting discomfort, which is why it will be described in more detail at the example of the meat paradox in this chapter.

As a starting point in his theory, Festinger (1957, pp. 1, 260) uses the fact that individuals strive towards consistency within themselves as an effort to create internal harmony and congruity among their own opinions, attitudes, values, and knowledge. Several everyday situations, however, challenge peoples' consistency and they are unavoidably confronted with inconsistencies within themselves occurring in almost every context of human life (Festinger, 1957, pp. 4, 5). Such an inconsistency is termed 'dissonance' (while consistency is called consonance) by Festinger (1957, p. 2) and is defined as "the existence of nonfitting relations among cognitions" (Festinger, 1957, p. 3). Cognitions thereby include any opinion or belief about oneself, one's behaviour, or the environment and they can be decomposed into elements or clusters of elements (Festinger, 1957, p. 260). As Festinger (1957, pp. 9–10) describes:

> "These elements, then, are 'knowledges' [...] Some of these elements represent knowledge about oneself: what one does, what one feels, what one wants or

> desires, what one is, and the like. Other elements of knowledge concern the world in which one lives: what is where, what leads to what, what things are satisfying or painful or inconsequential or important, etc. It is clear that the term 'knowledge' has been used to include things to which the word does not ordinarily refer – for example, opinions. A person does not hold an opinion unless he thinks it is correct, and so, psychologically, it is not different from a 'knowledge'. The same is true of beliefs, values, or attitudes, which function as 'knowledges' for our purposes".

In an article about cognitive dissonance theory, Harmon-Jones (2012, p. 544) emphasises that Festinger (1957) defined cognitions in relation to a particular generative or focal cognition, which is usually related to a behaviour. Hence, the theory can be useful in the example of the behaviour of meat eating. Cognitive elements corresponding to behaviour have a special nature because these behavioural elements can 'link' two cognitions which were formerly irrelevant to each other by being relevant to both of these cognitions, thereby making those cognitions relevant to each other (Festinger, 1957, p. 12). Such behavioural elements are of great importance in everyday life and their interaction with other elements are responsible for a lot of dissonant situations, as Festinger (1957, pp. 16–17) describes:

> "For almost any action a person might take, for almost any feeling he might have, there will most likely be at least one cognitive element dissonant with this 'behavioral' element [...] there are generally so many other cognitive elements relevant to any given element that some dissonance is the usual state of affairs".

Dissonance (or consonance) can, however, only occur, when elements are relevant to each other; if they are irrelevant to each other, i.e. they have nothing to do with each other, implications of the first element are of no concerns to the implications of the second element (Festinger, 1957, pp. 11–12). Experiencing a state of dissonance between what a person believes/knows and what she does, means that two or more (clusters of) elements of cognitions are in conflict with each other, implying that what follows from one element is the obverse of the other (Festinger, 1957, p. 13). Since people seek consistency within their believes and actions, cognitive dissonance results in discomfort, an unpleasant state of tension (Festinger, 1957, p. 2), observable even in physiological reactions like changes of the skin's electrical conductivity (Hogg & Vaughan, 2011[1995], p. 216).

Concerning the meat paradox, the ambivalence of people towards animals and the resulting discomfort can be described as a cognitive dissonance. As reflected in the caring

attitude people usually display towards their pets, and also in their increasing interest in animal welfare, they generally do feel empathy for animals and do not like to think about animals being harmed or killed – a common circumstance in meat production. Further, despite the high consumption of meat, slaughtering an animal still can take the form of a taboo in society (Hoogland et al., 2005, p. 16). However, the vast majority of exactly these people does engage in a behaviour, namely 'meat eating', that contradicts their opinion, namely that harming and killing (most) animals simply is 'wrong'.[9] Hence, most people are inconsistent (on an individual as well as on a societal level; Serpell, 2009, pp. 641–642) and a clear cognitive dissonance between behaviour and beliefs is evoked (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 247; Loughnan et al., 2014, p. 104), because: "One does not eat meat without the death of an animal" (Adams, 2010[1990], p. 66).

Although Festinger's (1957) assumptions about cognitive dissonance seem to be universally applicable to a wide range of people, it would be too easy to paint all men and women with a broad brush: individual and cultural differences may account for differences in consistency preferences (Harmon-Jones, 2012, p. 548) and aversion to dissonance (Newby-Clark et al., 2002, p. 157), and Festinger (1957, pp. 266–267) himself notes that people react differently (in terms of intensity and kind) to experienced dissonance. These differences were also found concerning the meat paradox: the experienced dissonance, for example, might be influenced by the species eaten (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 254) and some meat eaters even will experience no dissonance at all (Loughnan et al., 2014, p. 104). Additionally, if people regularly eat meat, they become accustomed to this kind of animal use and the accompanying cognitive dissonance (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 254). Based on their study results Bastian et al. (2012, p. 254) furthermore suggest that:

> "Perceptions that protect against dissonance may become deeply embedded within minds and cultures. This highlights the possibility that not only does dissonance reduction protect cultural practices, but the experience itself may shape culturally endorsed beliefs and perceptions".

This thesis, however, will focus on those meat eaters who consciously experience the (upcoming) described dissonance.

[9] On which ethical grounds it can be seen as objectionable to harm or kill animals commonly used for meat production, will be worked out in detail later on (see chapter 3.2). At the very moment it is merely the fact that people generally hold this belief which is of interest for us.

2.2.1 Rationalisation of potentially conflicting cognitions

To not end up in a constant psychologically and physiologically demanding unpleasant affective state (Loughnan et al., 2012, p. 16), most people try to rationalise the conflict between two potentially dissonant cognitive elements in advance, before a cognitive dissonance can manifest itself (Festinger, 1957, p. 2).

In the case of meat eating, this is done in various ways. Loughnan et al. (2010, p. 156), for example, state that "some meat eaters may live in a state of tacit denial, failing to equate beef with cow, pork with pig, or even chicken with chicken". The psychologist Joy (2011[2010], pp. 96–97) whose theory will be presented later in more detail (see chapter 2.4), states that focusing on what she calls the 'myths of meat eating', namely the normality, naturalness, and necessity of this behaviour (see chapter 2.4.1), helps to justify it before a dissonance may arise (see also Plous, 1993). Adams (2010[1990], p. 115) points out that in common language also historical justification strategies are hidden.

Following Festinger (1957, p. 2) who describes the possibilities of rationalisation at the example of a smoker who finds out that smoking is bad for his/her health, but continues to do so, one can also imagine several justifications meat eaters would use to rationalise their behaviour in order to avoid a possibly upcoming dissonance, like: 'Meat is too delicious to give up eating it. My pleasure of eating it justifies what happens to the animals' or, 'Since the animals live happy lives and killing is done painlessly, I see no reason to quit eating meat'.

2.2.2 Occurence of cognitive dissonance

However, if people do not manage to rationalise their behaviour for whatever reason, they will start to experience a cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957, p. 2). So, if people are not able to deal with the inconsistency of their actions involved in meat eating by using any of the rationalisation strategies, they will undergo a certain discomfort (Loughnan et al., 2010, p. 156).

The occurrence of dissonance usually is triggered either when a person is confronted with new information or new events, or when a person has to take a decision or form an opinion (Festinger, 1957, pp. 4–5). Looking at the example of meat eating, it appears that the first possibility is more likely (e.g. encountering information about animal husbandry and current animal welfare issues via the media) as to eat meat usually is no fundamental decision made every time one sits down at the dinner table (as the second possibility would suggest).

According to Festinger (1957, pp. 16–17), not all dissonant relations are of the same magnitude, which rather depends on one of two factors: first on the importance of the elements involved, second (when looking at a cluster of cognitions) on the proportion of the number of consonant to dissonant elements.

2.2.3 Reduction of cognitive dissonance

Since people seek consistency, they are motivated to reduce the dissonance (Festinger, 1957, p. 3). This reduction is described as a basic process in humans which becomes apparent in many different situations (Festinger, 1957, p. 4). Festinger (1957, p. 3) proposes that dissonance is a "motivating factor in its own right" and "can be seen as an antecedent condition which leads to activity oriented toward dissonance reduction just as hunger leads to activity oriented toward hunger reduction". Dissonance hence acts as a state of drive, need, or tension giving rise to pressures to reduce or eliminate it (Festinger, 1957, p. 18). The greater the magnitude of the dissonance, the stronger the motivation to reduce it (Festinger, 1957, p. 18). Dissonance reduction will be of special interest in this chapter as the philosophical part of this thesis will deal with exactly this topic (see chapter 3).

Dissonance can be eliminated in several different ways, depending on the cognitive context and the type of elements involved (Festinger, 1957, pp. 18–19). Festinger (1957, pp. 19–22) defines three possible modes of dissonance reduction:

First, a behavioural cognitive element can be changed because if the behaviour changes, the cognitive element corresponding to it will likewise change, consequently producing consonance with the other elements (Festinger, 1957, p. 19).

Second, sometimes an environmental cognitive element can be changed, but this is only possible in very few cases when one has enough control over the environment (e.g. painting over the red coloured wall in one's living room with a soft yellow colour because one holds the opinion that yellow has a better effect on one's mood than red has; Festinger, 1957, pp. 19–21). Changing an environmental cognitive element is of course rather hard because changing reality might often be impossible (e.g. that my grandfather is my grandfather; Festinger, 1957, p. 20). Festinger (1957, p. 21) gives the following example: a person standing in the rain will unavoidably have the cognition that it is raining no matter how hard he/she tries to eliminate this cognition. If one nevertheless wants to change such a strong environmental cognitive element in a situation where changing the actual situation is not possible, one has to make use of ignoring strategies or such ones that counteract reality (Festinger, 1957, p. 21). In some situations changing an environmental

cognition might be possible in a way that does not involve true alteration of reality but rather includes a change of opinion; for example, whereas it is hardly possible to change the personality of the president currently in office, it is possible to change one's view of him/her by changing one's opinion about his/her character traits even though this person really has not changed at all (Festinger, 1957, p. 21). If this is the case, however, one usually needs other people to support this new opinion (Festinger, 1957, p. 21).

Third, new cognitive elements can be added which reduce the total magnitude of dissonance by shifting the relation between the number of consonant and dissonant elements (Festinger, 1957, pp. 21–22). There are a lot of different possibilities to add new cognitive elements and sometimes even new cognitive elements can be added which 'reconcile' two dissonant elements (Festinger, 1957, p. 22). The adding of new elements involves cautious seeking of new information (Festinger, 1957, p. 22).

Literature about the meat paradox indicates that meat eaters usually show a great effort to overcome their cognitive dissonance (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 247; see also Plous, 1993) by using the possibilities of dissonance reduction specified above. As Loughnan et al. (2014, p. 106) describe, the first and second mode are used most often in order to deal with the meat paradox. Either one completely stops eating meat and becomes a so-called 'moral vegetarian' or one starts to change one's beliefs about the characteristics upon which moral considerations are based and hence about what makes it objectionable to harm and kill those animals used for meat production (e.g. an animal's sensation- or intellect-related capacities which are often referred to as 'mind'); for example, a person who thinks that it is morally wrong to harm a sentient being can simply deny an animal his/her capacity to suffer.

The first option corresponds to a change of a behavioural element, as described by Festinger (1957, p. 19). Changing the behaviour, however, might not always be too easy (Festinger, 1957, p. 19) as such behavioural adjustments are hard to make because culinary practices are deeply rooted in society (Veilleux, 2014, p. 3). Nevertheless, according to Loughnan et al. (2014, p. 104): "The surest way to eliminate moral tension associated with eating animals is to not eat them". The second option represents the attempt of changing an environmental cognitive element, meaning that these people try to change the reality of an animal's nature. Even though the second option of course is not possible in a straightforward sense which would actually change reality, humans' ability to change their beliefs about reality seems to suffice to reduce their dissonance. However, in order for this to occur, people usually need social support from others who agree with the new opinion (Festinger, 1957, p. 21), namely the change of belief about an animal's nature.

The third option, namely adding a new cognitive element in form of new information can, for example, involve reducing dissonance by relying on material that describes how animals in the wild are killed and eaten too, possibly even dying a more painful death than in slaughterhouses. No matter which attempts meat eaters make to deal with the dissonance between what they do and what they believe, they usually take the path most easy to follow (Prunty & Apple, 2013, p. 266).

2.2.4 Resistence to dissonance reduction

It is also possible, of course, that cognitive elements cannot be changed and hence the dissonance cannot be reduced (Festinger, 1957, p. 24). There are several different sources that can influence the resistance of dissonance reduction, of which some will be listed in this chapter. Mainly the responsiveness of reality of the cognitive element in question and its relationship with other elements are responsible for such a resistance (Festinger, 1957, pp. 24, 27).

Concerning the issue of meat, people live and are socialised within a reality in which the production and consumption of meat is common practice, hence the cognitive elements involved have a high responsiveness to reality. Furthermore, even though the behavioural cognitive element of meat eating might be dissonant with certain beliefs, it is highly consonant with culture (Holm & Møhl, 2000, p. 277) and farming as well as its participants (e.g. farmers) usually enjoy a positive role in society (Mitchell, 2011, p. 47). Together with the belief in the essentiality of farming, meat eating is closely related to consonant elements counteracting wishes to quit it. As Bastian et al. (2012, p. 247) point out, people do not want to change their eating habits because of the importance of maintaining the role of food-connected culture.

When looking at behavioural cognitive elements, change can also be difficult because it can be accompanied by pain or loss, or because the behaviour is satisfying in another way, or because change is impossible (Festinger, 1957, pp. 25–26). In this sense, for meat eaters, quitting to eat meat can involve some kind of loss of their appreciated habits or even of something that they think of as an integral part of their personality. In addition to that, meat eating simply is pleasant in terms of taste. That a behavioural change is not possible at all, however, is in general not true for most meat eaters in the Western world; not only are there sufficient alternatives, but also is there no necessity of meat eating for human survival as was confirmed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA, 1995, p. 8). Resistance to dissonance reduction concerning environmental cognitive elements occurs because often it is simply not possible to change the actual situation or – in case

one tries to change one's beliefs about the environment – others have to be found to support one's new view (Festinger, 1957, p. 27). According to Festinger (1957, p. 266), the resistance to change also indirectly defines the magnitude of the dissonance as:

> "The maximum dissonance which can exist between two elements is equal to the resistance to change of the less resistant of the two elements. If the dissonance exceeds this magnitude, the less resistant cognitive element will be changed, thus reducing the dissonance".

2.2.5 Avoidance of dissonance increase

Avoidance of an increase of dissonance is done in a highly selective process of seeking dissonance-reducing information and social support (Festinger, 1957, p. 30). Dissonance-increasing information and confrontation with others, which is likely to multiply dissonance, will be evaded (Festinger, 1957, p. 30). The greater the dissonance, the greater the avoidance of dissonance-increasing situations (Festinger, 1957, p. 30). If people are involuntarily exposed to information (in a forced or accidental manner) which might increase an existing dissonance, quick defensive processes will be employed to 'escape' information, e.g. by wrongly interpreting it or denying its validity in order to prevent a dissonance from establishing itself (Festinger, 1957, p. 134).

Regarding the meat paradox people might, for example, not only look for certain guidebooks or doctors emphasizing the necessity of meat consumption, but also avoid certain documentaries about poor welfare of animals used for meat production, discussions with animal advocates, and the like. They are reluctant to be reminded of the origins and processing of their meat-containing meal, particularly while eating it (Adams, 2010[1990], p. 96; Hoogland et al., 2005, p. 16).

Furthermore, to create a psychological distance in order to prevent a dissonance increase, people try to disengage from the practice of animal slaughter (Bilewicz et al., 2011, p. 201) and show great levels of avoidance as a form of denial of what is happening to animals used for meat production (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 21). Strategies to disengage are acquired from a young age and are progressively developed (Bandura, 2002, p. 110; see also Bandura et al., 1996). They can take several different forms operating together (Bandura, 2002, p. 112). All of them are highly promoted by economic and governmental forces which have a great interest in maintaining high levels of meat consumption (Williams, 2008, p. 376; Fitzgerald, 2015, pp. 31, 64, 66, 77–80) and support the increasing divide between production, processing, and consumption (Fitzgerald, 2015, p. 54) "to

keep the public from finding out what goes on in the windowless warehouses" (Robbins, 2011, p. 8). According to Plous (1993, pp. 14–21) these forms include among others: linguistic strategies, strategies concerning the appearance of meat, and physical distancing strategies. Examples for linguistic strategies are that people frequently use euphemisms like 'processing' instead of 'slaughtering' or name the meat different than its animal source, like saying pork for pig (Tischler, 2010, pp. 266–267; see also Adams, 2010[1990]; Jepson, 2008; Mitchell, 2011). Linguistic strategies, however, might not be the same or equally pervasive in all languages (and hence also not in all cultures). In the English language, for example, the term 'meat', originally denoting any kind of solid food distracts from what the product really is, namely 'flesh' (Singer, 2009[1975], pp. 95–96). This is different to the German language, which literally uses the term 'flesh' (i.e. 'Fleisch') to describe animal meat. Further, in the German language (in contrast to the English one) the term for living pigs, chickens, etc. is the same as for their meat, respectively (i.e. 'Schwein', 'Huhn'), sometimes (but not always) only added the term 'flesh' (i.e. 'Schweinefleisch', 'Hühnerfleisch'). Interestingly, however, this is not the case with cows, where terms for the living animal and his/her meat are usually distinguished more often (i.e. 'Kuh' and 'Rindfleisch'). Strategies concerning the appearance of meat, for example, describe the fact that consumers do not want the meat to resemble the live animal, which is why recognisable parts of meat, like tongue or whole heads, are only very rarely served (see also Holm & Møhl, 2000; Hoogland et al., 2005; Rosenberger, 2012). Physical distancing strategies mostly are true for people living in urban regions who usually only come in direct contact with farm animals when they are served as food (Singer, 2009[1975], p. 95; Adams, 2010[1990], p. 66; Grimm & Hartnack, 2013, p. 372; Fitzgerald, 2015, p. xii) and, for example, include the placement of slaughterhouses in great distance to residential areas (see also Mitchell, 2011; Rosenberger, 2012; Fitzgerald, 2015). Joy (2011[2010], p. 38) precisely captures this phenomenon when she says: "Meat is literally everywhere we turn. So where are all the animals?"

Knowing about the cognitive dissonance, occurrence, reduction, etc., which Festinger (1957) was able to capture in a rather clear and comprehensive theory, we can now better understand several cognitive processes and the behaviour of people in certain situations. It has also been shown that it is quite useful in exploring the meat paradox from a psychological perspective.

However, besides the advantages of this fairly theoretical framework, its application to practical phenomena can sometimes be problematic: distinctively separating examples of rationalisation strategies from strategies and mechanisms of dissonance reduction and

strictly categorising human behaviour seems problematic to me as drawing sharp lines might not always be possible. In some sense, the rationalisation strategies, as described above, can already be forms of dissonance reduction, even though they are said to be used in order to prevent a dissonance from arising; without some kind of experienced dissonance there would otherwise be no reason to make use of such strategies. Unconscious, preconscious, and conscious cognitive elements often fluently interact with each other and overlap in a complex manner. Especially the timeline implied by Festinger's (1957) theory, according to which it is relatively easy to distinguish two points in time, namely 'before the occurrence of dissonance' and 'after the occurrence of dissonance', can be difficult to be applied to practical problems: beliefs, attitudes, opinions, etc. might not be easily assigned to those two positions and this is challenging when trying to explain all the nuances of humans' behaviour. This might have shone through when applying Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance to the meat paradox. Nevertheless, the theory seems to be a good basis for further investigations of this work, provided that it is kept in mind that transitions between rationalisation strategies and dissonance-reducing mechanisms, etc. can be smooth.

In addition to look at the more general psychological theory underlying the dissonance of meat eating, it is also interesting to look at the meat paradox from a more practical view. Therefore, in the next chapter (see chapter 2.3) some empirical findings of psychological studies, which can be applied to the topic, will be presented.

2.3 Empirical psychological research on the meat paradox

As the previous chapter (see chapter 2.2) has shown, the ambivalence towards animals experienced by most people who eat meat can be explained with the theory of cognitive dissonance developed by Festinger (1957). It helps us to better understand not only the causes of the meat paradox but also the ways in which it is dealt with.

More recent empirical studies conducted by psychologists contribute to these explanations by investigating peoples' attitudes towards animals in connection with meat-eating behaviour and their handling of the meat paradox. Although the selected papers presented in this chapter show marginally different approaches, it can be seen that ethics and philosophy are mentioned in all of them, even though the approaches are of psychological origin.

When Festinger (1957, p. 2) explains the occurrence of a dissonance as the co-existence of nonfitting cognitive elements, he supports his theory with examples that are at a first

glance not directly tied to moral issues.[10] These studies, however, make clear that in the case of the meat paradox, matters are tightly connected to ethical issues (as already touched in the previous chapter; see chapter 2.2), because the meat paradox describes the dissonance between the act of eating animals and the belief that it is morally wrong to hurt and kill (or: to let hurt and let kill) animals – a fact unavoidable in meat production.[11] What makes such (and other) behaviour towards others – in this particular case animals – morally wrong, however, can be based upon different characteristics a being possesses (e.g. sentience, mind, or other similarities to humans in certain respects). Having or not having these characteristics then is crucial in deciding whether the animal has to be given any moral consideration.

As all of the three selected papers focus on the second mode of dissonance reduction (i.e. the changing of an environmental element or belief about an environmental element; see chapter 2.2.3), it can be shown that it is exactly these characteristics (representing the environmental element, e.g. sentience) meat eaters are eager to deny an animal.[12] This way, they are able to reduce the animal by the very essential basis for his/her moral consideration – and if the animals lack this good of being morally considerable, meat eaters can consume them (commonly including harming and necessarily killing them) with a clear conscience. The dissonance will hence be reduced.

Since the authors do not only provide us with empirical psychological data but also show the link to possible ethical interpretations of it (e.g. by identifying morally relevant characteristics of animals), a short description of each paper will be given to later on make the connection to the philosophical reflection on objectification more straightforward (see chapter 3). It is, however, important to note that all the authors of the described studies closely stick to their empirical findings neutrally describing them without drawing normative conclusions.

[10]Festinger's (1957, p. 2) prominent example of a smoker who gets to know that smoking is detrimental to his/her health but continues to carry out this behaviour, which leads to a cognitive dissonance (between a behaviour and a newly learned knowledge) does not initially include moral implications. In how far neglecting his/her own health might have indirect moral consequences, e.g. concerning his/her left-behind family in case of his smoking-related death, is debatable but is not of primary relevance for the person's own cognitive dissonance and hence not comparable to the situation of the meat paradox in which ethical considerations play a central role.

[11]There are, however, other possible dissonances that can come up in the connection to meat consumption, which do not carry an ethical connotation, e.g. a dissonance between a healthy lifestyle and the excessive consumption of meat. These cases are not relevant for this thesis.

[12]That these animals actually possess these characteristics they are denied and that thus the discussion about such denials is legitimate also from an empirical point of view, has long been shown by research. Benz-Schwarzburg (2012) and DeGrazia (1996), for example, give a reprehensible insight into the characteristics, capacities, and abilities of different animals.

2.3.1 No mind for animals

In their paper Bastian et al. (2012) describe three separate studies, all of which confirm their hypothesis that meat eaters deny animals mind[13] in order to reduce the negative affect associated with meat consumption. This enables them to adhere to their culinary practice and cultural habit of eating meat because "although most people do not mind eating meat, they do not like thinking of animals they eat as having possessed minds" (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 254).[14]

In their studies, however, mind as such is not exactly defined, but is characterised by different capacities or states (slightly varying in the three studies), which are thought to be indicative of possessing mind (Bastian et al., 2012, pp. 249, 250, 251).[15] Even though this makes it rather difficult to have a firm understanding of the term, the authors condense the findings of all these studies to a conclusion concerning the mind of animals as such (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 254).

Participants of the first study were asked to rate the degree to which certain animals possessed ten mental capacities as well as their edibility and were furthermore asked to indicate how bad they would feel when eating these animals and how morally wrong it would be to eat them (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 249). Results show that animals perceived as edible are also perceived as having less mind and participants furthermore expressed that eating these animals would not make them feel as bad and would not be as morally wrong as eating animals viewed as inedible and possessive of several mental capacities (Bastian et al., 2012, pp. 249–250). The higher the mind attribution the higher the moral concern for the animal in question (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 250).

[13] At this point it is important to realise that there is no such thing as a simple definition of mind, especially not when it comes to (different) animals. The term 'mind' is characterised by its high complexity which becomes noticeable when looking at the three papers described within this chapter: the authors use slightly different – often overlapping – terms to define the word 'mind' (in case of the third paper not even using the word 'mind' as such), all of which will be mentioned when describing them.

[14] It should not go unnoticed that the described studies by Bastian et al. (2012) have been conducted in Australia, which is no Western industrialised country in the most narrow sense. Since Australia, however, is a developed industrialised country very similar to the Western ones, this is considered unproblematic for the interpretation of the results of the paper.

[15] In the first study Bastian et al. (2012, p. 249) define mind by using five experience-related capacities (hunger, fear, pleasure, pain, rage) and five agency-related capacities (self-control, morality, memory, emotion recognition, planning). In the second one they do not distinguish between these two subcategories, but use the following 15 mental states: pleasure, fear, rage, joy, happiness, desires, wishes, planning, goals, pride, pain, hunger, tasting, seeing, hearing (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 250). In the third study 18 similar terms are used as mental capacities: pleasure, fear, rage, joy, happiness, desiring, wishing, planning, choosing, thinking, pain, hunger, tasting, seeing, hearing, intending, imagining, reasoning (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 251).

In the second study participants were divided into two groups and all of them were given a picture of commonly eaten animals including a short description; via the description only one group was thereby reminded of the usage of the animal as meat (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 250). When asked to afterwards rate the extent to which these animals possessed mental capacities, it became obvious that meat eaters who were reminded of the meat's origin are higher motivated to deny mind to edible animals for the sake of the reduction of the dissonance than meat eaters who were not forced to recall the meat's source (Bastian et al., 2012, pp. 250–251).

The third study described in this paper asked participants to rate to which extent 18 mental capacities are possessed by cows and sheep, but this time at two different points in time (Bastian et al., 2012, pp. 251–252). Before doing the rating for the second time, they were not only reminded of the meat's animal source but were also told that they were going to eat meat/apples afterwards (depending on the one of the two different groups they were divided in beforehand; Bastian et al., 2012, pp. 250–251). In alignment with the other studies, results show that people who know that they are going to eat meat in the near future are more strongly motivated to deny mind to animals to facilitate consumption and reduce negative affect than people who do not expect to eat meat; other measures also show that meat-sampling participants had less negative emotions the more they had denied the animals mind beforehand (Bastian et al., 2012, pp. 252–253). It was observed that all participants were less willing to ascribe animals mind at the second point in time when they had already been reminded of the meat's origin (Bastian et al., 2012, pp. 252–253). Hence it can be shown that "not only is mind denial triggered by dissonance, but the act of denying minds reduces negative affect before eating meat, suggesting reduced dissonance and increased capacity for effective and unconflicted action" (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 253).

Bastian et al. (2012, pp. 253–254) were therefore able to show in their studies that people are motivated by dissonance to deny animals minds, especially when reminded of animal harm because they want to continue to eat meat and to protect this seemingly essential part of their culture. Denying animals their minds is one possibility to withdraw the basis for moral consideration and hence 'solve' the moral problem which leads to the dissonance in the first place.

2.3.2 No sentience for animals

The content of the paper written by Loughnan et al. (2010) is similar to the one by Bastian et al. (2012; see chapter 2.3.1), showing that denial of mind is not necessarily the basis for classifying animals as edible or inedible, but that it might as well be the other way round, namely that denial of mind will be employed in a second step only after reduction of concern for edible animals is already in place to justify meat eating.

Comparable to the study by Bastian et al. (2012), Loughnan et al. (2010, p. 157) indirectly define mind by looking at an animal's potential experience of different sensation- and intellect-related cognitive states.[16]

The study required the test persons to eat either beef or cashews and to afterwards express their moral concern for 27 different animals as well as to rate the cognitive states of cows to indicate how deserving of moral treatment a cow was and to express how discomforting it would be to harm him/her (Loughnan et al., 2010, p. 157). The outcomes reveal that those persons who ate beef showed moral concern for lesser animals and lesser moral concern for cows than the ones who sampled the cashews (Loughnan et al., 2010, pp. 157–159). Furthermore, in contrast to the studies carried out by Bastian et al. (2012), these results decidedly emphasise the role of the suffering-related component of mind.

The authors therefore conclude that "eating meat might lead people to withdraw moral concern from animals, which they then rationalise via a perceived reduction in animals' capacity to suffer" (Loughnan et al., 2010, p. 158). Once again, the withdrawal of moral concern via denying animals crucial characteristics serving as the basis for moral consideration – in this case characteristics related to their capacity to suffer – functions as dissonance-relieving strategy.

What is interesting is that the studies of Bastian et al. (2012) and Loughnan et al. (2010) basically state the same concerning their content and even partly concerning their outcome, but that we once again are confronted with the question about the 'timeline', i.e. whether the strategies to avoid facing the meat paradox appear before meat eating (problem with meat's animal source → denying animals mind → dissonance alleviated → eating animals) or afterwards (eating animals → problem with meat's animal source → denying animals mind → dissonance alleviated). This appears to be very similar to the problem that was addressed in chapter 2.2.5. However, since both studies appear to be

[16]The nine sensation-related cognitive capacities include seeing, hearing, tasting, pain, hunger, pleasure, fear, happiness, rage and the nine intellect-related cognitive capacities include thinking, imagining, wishing, needing, desiring, intending, planning, choosing, reasoning (Loughnan et al., 2010, p. 157).

valid, we see that it is not easy to distinctly categorise or rigidly sequence these psychological phenomena and at the same time can be even more confirmed that Festinger's (1957) theory can be taken as a good starting point to theoretically explore the meat paradox in a dynamic manner.

2.3.3 No emotions for animals

A somewhat different approach to the topic can be found in the investigation conducted by Bilewicz et al. (2011), which studies meat eaters as well as vegetarians. However, even though they focus more on the ascription of what they call emotions and certain characteristics than explicitly of mind, the terms used by them are very similar to the mental states and mental/cognitive capacities used in the papers described above (Bilewicz et al., 2011, pp. 203, 204, 206).[17]

Their studies follow the hypothesis that the ascription of these emotions and characteristics is essential in determining whether an animal is worth moral consideration or not (Bilewicz et al., 2011, pp. 201–202) and hence pursue a similar approach like both other papers (see chapters 2.3.1 and 2.3.2).

In a first survey the authors asked participants to rate 30 emotions according to their human uniqueness and were able to show that vegetarians assign more secondary emotions, which are commonly perceived as uniquely human, to animals than do meat eaters (Bilewicz et al., 2011, pp. 203–204).

The second study had participants rate to what extent 20 characteristics are identified as uniquely human (i.e. distinguishing humans from animals) or as the basis of human nature (i.e. distinguishing humans from machines; Bilewicz et al., 2011, p. 204). According to the results, meat eaters deny animals more human-like characteristics than do vegetarians, narrowing the scope of humanness more readily (Bilewicz et al., 2011, pp. 204–205).

[17] Even though in their first study Bilewicz et al. (2011, p. 203) let participants rate 30 different emotions, most of them acted as distracters and only eight were used as indicators for the analysis. Those indicators were divided into four primary emotions (fear, panic, happiness, excitement) and four secondary emotions (guilt, regret, nostalgia, melancholy). The second study deals with 20 terms simply called 'characteristics' by the authors: artistic, conscientious, talkative, imaginative, generous, shallow, organised, curious, irresponsible, undependable, assertive, conventional, frivolous, shy, reserved, anxious, reliable, incapable, hard-hearted, tense (Bilewicz et al., 2011, p. 204). Coming back to emotions in the third study, this time six primary emotions (rage, surprise, pain, fear, happiness, pleasure) and six secondary emotions are used (shame, hope, melancholy, love, guilt, tenderness; Bilewicz et al., 2011, p. 206).

Bilewicz et al. (2011, p. 206) furthermore conducted a study involving a distinction between edible animals and inedible animals by asking one group of persons how likely it is that dogs experience twelve listed emotions and the other group the same for pigs. They found out that meat eaters in general ascribe fewer emotions to animals than do vegetarians and that they also differentiate between pigs and dogs with pigs being perceived as having fewer emotions (Bilewicz et al., 2011, pp. 206–207).

What becomes clear in these three studies conducted by Bilewicz et al. (2011) is that meat eaters not only attribute animals primary emotions but also exclude them from having human-like characteristics (Bilewicz et al., 2011, p. 207). By using these strategies, clear-cut borders between humans and animals can be established and the concept of human uniqueness promoted; this can be seen as a moral disengagement from eating animals (Bilewicz et al., 2011, p. 208) as once again something that can serve as the basis for moral consideration (i.e. certain emotions and characteristics) is denied to animals and hence meat eating seems to become morally unproblematic, alleviating the former dissonance.

The description of these three papers shows that the meat paradox as well as the strategies to deal with it are real world problems; the meat paradox is not only a theoretical construct of psychological theory, but affects people in everyday life and touches ethical realms.

Taken all together the studies clearly demonstrate that people are willing to use the second mode of dissonance reduction (i.e. changing their beliefs about the environment) when it comes to eating animals. What lies at the centre of all these study results is *denial* – no matter on which traits of animals (e.g. agency-related capacities, emotions, etc.) the focus of the investigations is put, participants are eager to deny them to animals if they, in their opinion, represent the basis of moral consideration. The fact that the authors do not use standardised definitions of animal capacities or characteristics and the fact that Loughnan et al. (2010) in contrast to the other authors emphasise that it is mainly the animals' capacity to suffer which people see as moral inclusion criterion for animals should not be worrying; on the contrary, this shows that even though the content of moral concern might vary or might even be hard for individuals to unambiguously determine, the core element of moral disengagement is denial – and this is what we should keep in mind when later turning to the philosophical part of this work (see chapter 3).

This dissonance-reducing strategy of denying seems to be central in enabling people to 'live' the meat paradox in day-to-day life. It is important to note that the forms of

denial identified by the findings of the studies do indeed represent a change of belief about the environment because not only is it nowadays widely accepted that animals (especially those used for meat production in Western industrialised countries) do possess several of these readily denied traits at least to a certain extent (e.g. fear, pain memory, senses), but also – and this is what is even more striking – that the willingness to deny them to animals is not the same for all animals but varies with their perceived edibility. While people love to think of their pets as emotional, understanding creatures capable of experiencing pain, and displaying their own personality characteristics, they fail to see these traits in the animals they are eating. Loughnan et al. (2010, p. 157) put this straight when stating that the tension of the meat paradox is often done by

> "reducing the extent to which they [meat eaters] afford animals moral status or worth. If animals lack moral status, then killing them is not a moral issue, and eating meat is not morally problematic. Psychological research makes it clear that people draw the boundaries of moral concern in a motivated, rather than an absolute, fashion".

It is this dealing with the meat paradox to which the psychologist Joy (2011[2010]) calls attention to in her theoretical concept of carnism that deals with the issue of meat. Her concept will be described in the following chapter (see chapter 2.4) as it does not only seem to take up several of the already described aspects, embedding them in a larger theory and thereby complementing the just depicted empirical works, but also explicitly mentions objectification in this context.[18]

2.4 Melanie Joy's concept of carnism

The title of Joy's (2011[2010]) book "Why we love dogs, eat pigs and wear cows" already reflects the aspect of the meat paradox that people treat some animals differently than others. Analysing the issue of meat, her theory is based upon the paradoxical attitude of most people towards animals manifesting in their empathy and at the same time in their gustatory desire towards them, which – according to her – unavoidably leads to an incongruence between values and beliefs and hence to a moral discomfort (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 18). Therefore, albeit using a slightly different terminology than the psychologists employed before, Joy's (2011[2010]) extensive theoretical concept aims to explain the

[18] The preliminary results of chapter 2.4 were developed within two essays I have written in the course of my master's programme: "Melanie Joy's Concept of Carnism. A philosophical approach to a psychological concept" and "Pigs as meat producing units – psychological mechanisms and philosophical concepts".

very same phenomenon, namely the meat paradox as a cognitive dissonance. In her search for reasons that enable people to eat animals anyway, she finds them within the complex system of what she calls carnism (Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 28–30). In contrast to the psychological studies presented in the previous chapter (see chapter 2.3), Joy (2011[2010]) approaches the topic from a more conceptual point of view also drawing morally normative consequences from her theory.

2.4.1 Carnism as an entrenched belief system

According to Joy (2011[2010], p. 30), carnism is defined as an entrenched belief system that conditions people to eat some animals but not others. Carnism seems to resemble an ideology (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 30) as it can be seen as a way of practice and thought "developed by dominant groups in order to reproduce and legitimate their domination" (van Dijk, 1997, p. 25).[19] Regarding the issue of meat it is mainly the domination over animals that is legitimised by the system of carnism. As the maintenance of carnism involves violent components, reaching from brutal handling and killing of animals to inhumane working conditions in the meat-processing chain and so forth (see also Fitzgerald, 2015), Joy (2011[2010], pp. 32–33) even views it as a violent ideology.

Promoted by laws, financial incentives, advertisements, corporations, organisations, social roles, etc. carnism is so internalised in society that it is made invisible, leaving the social construct of meat production and consumption considered common sense by the majority of people (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 31; see also Adams, 2010[1990]; Tischler, 2010; Mitchell, 2011; Fitzgerald, 2015) and: "As knowledge is socially constructed, dominant ideologies shape our interpretations of the social and natural world" (Longo & Malone, 2006, p. 118). Born into this culture and not encouraged to think (or even kept from thinking) about the entangled issue of meat, one becomes involuntarily involved (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 32). Meat usually is associated with the traditional food culture of childhood (Holm & Møhl, 2000, p. 279) and food choices – and hence also meat choices – are influenced by social structures (Kalof et al., 1999, p. 501). Meat eating – which is a priori hard to see through – hence becomes an unquestioned habit and a social norm (Salt, 1907, p. 50; Adams, 2010[1990], p. 18; Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 31–32; Bastian et al., 2012, p. 254; Grimm & Hartnack, 2013, p. 371; Fitzgerald, 2015, p. 109). Interestingly, however, children who are not yet totally conform with the culture and society they live in, are

[19] This of course is only a very rough definition of the term ideology, which is used in a variety of ways (Stibbe, 2001, p. 147), but this description suffices for our purposes. For a detailed analysis of ideological components of agriculture and the meat industry see Hardeman and Jochemsen (2012).

the ones who more readily question the habit of meat eating (Altner, 1991, p. 237), but usually are encouraged to accept the necessity of death of (certain) animals for food as given (Adams, 2010[1990], p. 106; Plous, 1993, pp. 21–25).

People thus are left to view the issue of meat through the lens of carnism (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 99). This enables them to theoretically separate the animals from the meat (Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 15, 17), which is different to vegetarians who seem to be more willing to reconnect meat to its living origin (Allen, 2000, p. 420). This disconnection of meat from its living source represents a missing link in the perceptual process which enables people to love and to eat animals at the same time (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 17). It is reinforced by social and political institutions (Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 97–100) that employ "a whole workforce [...] to keep meat-processing and consumption separate" (Fitzgerald, 2015, p. 64). Therefore, the connection between the animal and the meat "has been lost almost completely from social consciousness in Western countries, where food simply 'comes from the supermarket' and little thought is given to how it got there" (Hoogland et al., 2005, p. 16).

Similar to the rationalisation strategies described in Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theory (see chapter 2.2), Joy (2011[2010], p. 116) names – amongst others – avoidance (e.g. avoidance of relevant information about meat production), denial (e.g. denial of facts about meat production promoted by the invisibility of the meat industry), and justification (e.g. justification of meat consumption because of an alleged necessity) as mechanisms that hold the system of carnism upright, whereby these mechanisms are closely linked to each other. Meat consumption is especially justified by what Joy (2011[2010], pp. 96–97) calls the three myths of meat, namely that meat eating is normal, natural, and necessary. According to her opinion, those three myths represent arguments of justification to eat meat based on the carnistic belief system rather than on true facts (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 96). She states that 'normal' in the case of meat eating only refers to the beliefs and behaviours of the dominant culture, of carnism (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 105). Also the myth that meat eating is 'natural' is based on a carnistic interpretation of history that focuses on the (small) meat component of our omnivorous ancestors' diet, deliberately ignoring the fact that they mainly survived on a plant-based diet, thereby looking only at those historical aspects that contribute to the maintenance and justification of carnism (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 107). That not only meat eating is unnatural, but especially the "exceedingly cruel relations" involved in today's meat-producing practices is also emphasised by Longo and Malone (2006, p. 119). Further, Joy (2011[2010], pp. 109–110)

explains that promoting meat as 'necessary' for human survival and health is done within the carnistic system to maintain carnistic practices, but lacks any factual foundation as research even has demonstrated that meat consumption can have detrimental effects on human health.

2.4.2 Psychological mechanisms to deal with the issue of meat

As Joy (2011[2010], pp. 103, 116–117) points out, not only the systemic means carnism provides people with (e.g. media), but also several strategies and mechanisms employed by people who might get a grasp of their paradoxical attitudes towards animals keeps the carnistic system going.[20] This is in accordance with the content of Festinger's (1957) theory (see chapter 2.2.3) and the confirmed hypotheses of the studies presented in the previous chapter (see chapter 2.3).

Joy (2011[2010], p. 117) particularly defines a set of three distinct psychological mechanisms referred to as the 'cognitive trio': deindividualisation, dichotomisation, objectification. They are "normal psychological processes" but "become defensive distortions when used excessively, as they must be in order to keep carnism intact" (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 117).

Deindividualisation

Deindividualisation is the act of viewing an individual only as part of a group lacking any individuality (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 119). The individual is thought to have the same characteristics as all other members of the group (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 119).

The process of deindividualisation is common in animal husbandry as animals used for meat production normally do not have names, and thus are turned into no-name animals.[21] They are usually identified by numbers, subtracting their individuality from

[20] Here we are again confronted with the uncertainty about which strategies or mechanisms are used in order to avoid an upcoming dissonance and which ones are used in order to solve an already experienced dissonance, and whether it is at all possible to rigidly categorise them (see chapter 2.2.5 and chapter 2.3.2); it seems that this problem has to be left unanswered within this thesis which should not be troubling since the major concern of this work is the ethical content of one of the mechanisms, which is objectification.

[21] Interestingly, however, in interviews conducted with stockpersons Wilkie (2005, p. 223) found that this is not necessarily true for breeding animals who are also involved in the meat production process, but in a slightly different way: in contrast to their conspecifics they are not fattened in a quite short period of time, but stay longer at the farm to regularly give birth to offspring. These individual animals are usually given a name and a more personal relationship develops, even though these animals will sooner or later end up at the abattoir, as well.

them.[22] This maintains a psychological and emotional distance to the animals necessary to deal with the fact that the animals are killed in order to eat their meat – because if there is no individuality behind the single animals, they can be used for meat production without bothering too much about their fate (Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 119–120).

Dichotomisation

Dichotomisation is the mental act of classifying others into two different (usually opposing) categories according to the beliefs that are held about them (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 122). Since there are only two classes involved, such a dichotomisation or categorisation takes place based on very little information, thereby contributing to a black and white picture of reality (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 122).

When it comes to animals they are commonly classified into edible and inedible animals (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 122). Such categories are then reinforced because once a being is perceived as belonging to a certain category, his/her category-relevant attributes are automatically highlighted and confirm the categorisation (Loughnan et al., 2012, p. 17). The categories are culturally, historically, and socially structured and already learned by early socialisation processes (Stewart & Cole, 2009, pp. 458, 473; Herzog, 2011[2010], p.47). They are also anchored within the law (e.g. the treatment of agricultural animals would be illegal if it were applied to pets; Hodson, 2014, s.p.) and there is nothing inherent in the animal that defines him/her as being part of a certain category (Arluke, 1988, p. 104). In Austrian terms, for example, people would readily define cows as edible, whereas they would be very reluctant to do so in the case of dogs. The only difference here is the underlying culture-shaped belief system.

Categorising animals into edible and inedible helps to maintain humans' meat-eating habits without questioning since it is relatively easy to justify eating animals categorised – and hence 'destined' – as food.

[22] This phenomenon does also appear in animal experimentation where animals – usually totally anonymous – are only referred to by labels and discussed as data or abstract entities (Arluke, 1988, p. 101; Herzog, 2011[2010], p. 46).

Objectification

Objectification is defined by Joy (2011[2010], p. 117) as a psychological defence mechanism people make use of in order to view living beings as inanimate objects, i.e. as things.[23] Concerning human-human relationships: "Objectification is conceived as an instrument of subjugation whereby the needs, interests, and experiences of those with less power are subordinated to those of the powerful, and this facilitates using others as means to an end" (Gruenfeld et al., 2008, p. 111). This is also true for human-animal relationships, especially in the context of the issue of meat, in which animals as those with less power are subjugated and used as an end to fulfil the gustatory pleasure of the more powerful humans.

When it comes to the issue of meat, objectification helps to justify nearly every form of arbitrary treatment of animals because people do not feel to have any moral obligations towards objects, whereas they do towards other living beings (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 118). Hence, the discomfort that might be experienced as a result of the ambivalent attitudes to animals is relieved when thinking of them as objects.[24] As Joy (2011[2010], p. 118) expresses:

> "When we can buy, sell, trade, or exchange someone as though he or she were a used car – or even parts of a used car – we have literally turned him or her into a piece of live *stock*. By viewing animals as objects, we can treat their bodies accordingly, without the moral discomfort we might otherwise feel".[25]

Objectification of animals is a phenomenon that has been taking place since the ancient times (Witt-Stahl, 2004, p. 10) and is closely tied to the common view of animal agriculture, where its close connection to commodification becomes especially apparent (Schrecker et al., 1997, p. 67; see also chapter 1.1). It is legitimised through institutions, policies, and legislation and is even reflected in the common use of language (Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 117–118).

With this cognitive trio, Joy (2011[2010], pp. 116–117) provides us with three distinct psychological mechanisms that help to deal with the discomfort generated by the meat

[23] Note that, in contrast to the definition given by Nussbaum (1995, p. 249; see chapter 1), Joy (2011[2010], p. 117) focuses only on the objectification's aspect of 'viewing'. This difference in the definition will be dealt with in chapter 3.1.

[24] In a way that objectification is used as a protection from realising the unnatural, human-induced death of the animal (Arluke, 1988, p. 99), it is – like deindividualisation – also used as a mechanism concerning laboratory animals.

[25] In agreement with this quote by Joy (2011[2010], p. 118) the term 'livestock' is avoided within this thesis, even though it is a very important technical term describing animals used for agricultural purposes (see also Fitzgerald, 2015, pp. xvii–xviii).

paradox. They, however, merely help to alleviate the dissonance by maintaining the gap in the perceptual process that hinders people to make the connection between the animal and the meat (Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 17, 19, 117). As such they promote the carnistic system, i.e. the carnistic matrix that keeps people captured (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 116) and let them function within it, but they do not actually close the gap and solve the meat paradox; hence, rather than tackling the cause of the meat paradox, they treat its symptoms, so to speak.

2.4.3 Escaping the carnistic matrix

To really break through the carnistic matrix Joy (2011[2010], p. 138) requests people to make this connection and close the missing link in the perceptual process via awareness, witnessing, and compassion. She emphasises that most people, especially children, feel a natural connection to animals and that humans have a sense of understanding and caring for nature (Joy, 2011[2010], pp. 18, 96). According to her, the key for finding a way out of this narrowing invisible belief system is to rely on peoples' sense of caring and not to turn away from the truth of meat production (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 137).

In that, Joy (2011[2010]) gives a clear normative direction into which people – according to her opinion – should go, more or less advising her reader to quit consuming animal meat. This distinguishes her from the authors of the psychological studies, who describe their findings more neutrally, avoiding to draw any normative conclusions (see chapter 2.3). Joy (2011[2010]), however, does not make use of established ethical concepts but rather tries to call on her readers by emotional means. Although her concept is therefore able to show the moral relevance of the issue of meat, it is, however, incomplete regarding an valid ethical base in which her arguments can root. Her theory therefore creates the impression as if it would simply overlay one normative concept with another one (e.g. eating meat with not eating meat), lacking straightforward outlined ethical arguments. Nevertheless, her approach is useful in drawing a more complex picture of the issue.

2.5 Wrap-up of the psychological view

After having seen the three modes of dissonance reduction proposed by Festinger (1957) as well as having identified the first two as being relevant to the meat paradox, it became clear that people who continue to eat meat usually make use of the second mode of dissonance reduction. Since – despite recent trends of vegetarianism (Povey et al., 2001, pp. 15, 37; Rippe, 2002, p. 234) – only a very small share of the Western population

abstains from eating meat (Rothgerber, 2012, p. 1), this is true for a lot of people. Such a change of an environmental belief (see chapter 2.2.3), as represented by the second mode of dissonance reduction, has been confirmed by the findings of the psychological studies (see chapter 2.3) and now is also true for the mechanism of objectification described from a more theoretical psychological perspective by Joy (2011[2010], pp. 117–118). Objectification, therefore, can be seen as an easy, superficial possibility for dealing with the cognitive dissonance bound to meat consumption. That objectification, firstly, falls under the second mode of dissonance reduction, that, secondly, aspects of denial lie at its very core, and that, thirdly, it is discussed in the philosophical discourse, are valid reasons to choose this mechanism to be analysed in the context of the meat paradox in an effort to bridge the two disciplines of psychology and philosophy. The fact that people are aware of their dissonance and subsequently consciously make use of objectifying strategies (Petrus, 2013, p. 44) furthermore justifies a discussion in the field of ethics, because consciously acting in certain ways is a prerequisite for ethical debate and – if necessary – change. Even though deindividualisation and dichotomisation are also described within Joy's (2011[2010], pp. 118–120, 122–123) theory, the focus will be put on objectification. Dichotomisation, on the one hand, might not even be counted as a mechanism of the second mode of dissonance reduction in a straight sense as it is in contrast to objectification a much more basic and especially a non-motivational process (Bratanova et al., 2011, p. 194). Whereas objectification is clearly used in order to reduce a certain discomfort tied to meat consumption, categorisation was also observed to occur independently of such a motivating factor (Bratanova et al., 2011, pp. 195–196). Deindividualisation, on the other hand, shows aspects of changing an environmental element and hence can be helpful when focusing on objectification; it does, however, not encompass such a wide range of facets as objectification does and is hence more to be understood a contributing factor in objectification (see chapter 3.1.5).

The detailed examination of the meat paradox from a psychological point of view in the first part of this thesis confirmed that the very essence of objectification is an act of denying something to somebody, in the sense that he/she is reduced to something. Therefore, the first part of the hypothesis of this work could be verified. This attitude of denying/reducing is exactly what has been found when analysing the empirical psychological studies in the previous chapter (see chapter 2.3) where denial of mind, emotions, etc. to animals were shown to be a useful strategy to overcome moral discomfort as it subtracts animals from those attributes moral consideration is commonly thought to be

bound to. Similar to that, the denial of the subject status alleviates dissonance as objects are regarded as things that do not have to be taken into account morally.

Having defined the meat paradox and the several strategies and mechanisms to deal with it, the tight connection between the two disciplines of psychology and philosophy regarding this topic now becomes evident. Psychological factors play a big role in the consumption of meat (Loughnan et al., 2014, p. 104) and psychology helps to explain not only peoples' attitudes but also their behaviour towards (different) animals and provides explanations about meat eating also in a cultural context (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 247). But as Bastian et al. (2012, p. 247) also point out, exploring the meat paradox is of importance because "it provides a novel perspective from which to observe basic psychological processes associated with every-day moral action" and hence "provide insights into how cognitive and motivational processes may obscure moral responsibility". It becomes very clear here that the issue of the meat paradox is tightly connected to ethical and moral questions. It is psychology that can explain the various strategies and mechanisms that help to deal with the meat paradox, but it is philosophy that is needed to understand what makes objectification ethically problematic.

As has become clear within this chapter, objectification is an applied psychological mechanism of dissonance reduction when it comes to meat eating. At this point now, it has to be questioned, whether the act of turning a subject into an object, whether this form of denial itself, is a morally reprehensible act, which is why philosophy and ethics come into play. To answer this question, first of all, it has to be clarified what objectifying a subject precisely means. This will be done in the philosophical part of this work (see chapter 3), in which Nussbaum's (1995) seven signposts of objectification of women will be looked at and put into the context of animals used for meat production (see chapter 3.1). After having attained these findings, Regan's (2004[1983]) theory will be employed to evaluate the moral implications of objectification with an animal-related ethical theory (see chapter 3.2).

Chapter 3

A philosophical analysis of animal objectification

The first part of this thesis (see chapter 2) revealed that alleviating the day-to-day issue of the meat paradox often involves objectification of the consumed animals as a means to reduce the psychological cognitive dissonance experienced by most meat eaters. The psychological studies described refer to ethical grounds when empirically exploring forms of denial as dissonance-reducing strategies; they do, however, not make normative claims in which direction the meat eaters' behaviour should go (see chapter 2.3). In contrast to that, Joy (2011[2010]) responds to the issue of meat by making normative claims to escape this system, but without properly defining an ethical base on which her arguments rest (see chapter 2.4). This shows that while looking at the psychological aspects of the issue of meat we are already entering philosophical terrain.

Since objectification can be described as a form of denial, which is commonly used to reduce dissonance concerning meat eating, this chapter will go into detail with an ethical examination of objectification. By doing so, the second part of the hypothesis will be investigated, namely that philosophical theories can help to uncover the components of denial common in objectifying practices towards animals used for meat production and that the ethical content of denial can be clarified as well as that moral problems relating to such a denial can be elaborated within the framework of an animal rights theory.

Although nowadays the concept of objectification is gaining more and more in awareness in social and moral philosophy, the focus of this development is mainly put on humans (e.g. Gray et al., 2011 studying the effect of a bodily focus on the ascription of agency and experience) with only very few elaborate texts on animal objectification (e.g. Petrus, 2013; Leitsberger, 2015, p. 4). Objectification is of particular interest in feminist philosophy

(Papadaki, 2015, s.p.) concerning sexuality (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 249), with Nussbaum (1995) providing an exhaustive theoretical outline of objectification of women in a sexual context.[26]

An attempt to apply her proposed seven signposts of objectification of women to animals used for meat production in chapter 3.1 and thereby taking a closer look at supposed objectifying acts against these animals will identify whether it can be said that these animals are objectified by the actions of humans in the course of the meat production process and what such objectification of animals means.

After this more theoretical consideration, the ethical content of the objectification's components of denial has to be evaluated to clarify whether objectification of animals is something morally objectionable or whether, ethically speaking, it is merely an unproblematic strategy to deal with the dissonance. This will be done in chapter 3.2 by employing the animals rights approach developed by Regan (2004[1983]) which will help to describe resulting normative implications regarding the issue of meat. A summary of this chapter of the thesis will finally conclude the philosophical considerations (see chapter 3.3).

3.1 Theoretically defining animal objectification

Nussbaum (1995) writes about sexual objectification in humans from a feminist standpoint and hence her approach differs in two basic aspects from the intention of this work: firstly, she looks at objectification in a sexual context and secondly, her focus is put on humans, especially women, whereas this work goes into detail with objectifying acts in meat production directed towards animals. However, Nussbaum (1995, p. 262) herself states that the question of animal objectification is a fascinating one and her work seems to be a good theoretical basis to approach the animal issue as Nussbaum (1995, p. 257) offers seven possible signposts of objectification. By doing so, she tries to clarify the slippery and complex concept of objectification (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 251) – a notion in philosophy whose proper definition is known as an ongoing debate (Papadaki, 2015, s.p.). She intends her analysis to be an "initial exploration of a concept whose full mapping will require many more investigations" (Nussbaum, 1995, pp. 290–291) and is aware that "each of these seven [signposts] would ultimately need more refinement in connection with debates about the proper analysis of the core notions" (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257). After

[26] Another philosopher dealing with the object-like treatment of humans is Axel Honneth (2008). He calls this phenomenon 'reification' and sees it as a reduced attentiveness to the recognition of the other's subjectivity in social interaction (Honneth, 2008). His approach has also been used for analysing the objectification of animals, for example by Leitsberger (2015). This work, however, will follow Nussbaum's (1995) approach to objectification.

giving a short definition of objectification, as Nussbaum (1995) understands it (see chapter 3.1.1), every single signpost that she thinks of as being indicative of objectification (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257) will be illuminated in the following chapters (see chapters 3.1.2 to 3.1.6). Finally, the features of objectification which are important for the issue of meat will be summarised (see chapter 3.1.7).

3.1.1 Martha Nussbaum's theory of human objectification

According to Nussbaum (1995, p. 249) objectification is about "speaking, thinking, and acting" in a way that treats "one thing as another: One is treating as an object what is really not an object, what is, in fact, a human being" (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 251). What is very important to note here is that Nussbaum (1995, p. 256) emphasises that objectification is a form of *treatment* and hence is reflected in our actions towards somebody. Since she examines human objectification, she emphasises the treatment of a human being as an object. In the animal case, however, it now has to be explored whether her signposts of objectification can also be applied to animals so that animal objectification in the course of meat production can be defined as *treating as an object, what is, in fact, an animal being*. Within this analysis, it is important to be aware that – as in human objectification – objectification of animals used for meat production is something that is done to the living being; it is not about seeing the piece of meat but about seeing the live animal as an object. Moreover, the entity carrying out the objectifying treatment, i.e. the objectifier, is always a human being – in cases of human objectification as well as in cases of animal objectification. The seven signposts Nussbaum (1995, p. 257) proposes describe common ways of how things are treated. Treating things in these ways is of course no case of objectification; objectification is about treating an entity that is not a thing as if it were one (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257).

The fact that Nussbaum (1995, p. 249) also includes 'speaking' and 'thinking' into her definition as ways of treating (and elsewhere also 'seeing'; Nussbaum, 1995, p. 251) can be explained insofar as to speak about someone as well as to think about someone in a certain way is tightly connected to the actions towards him/her: in the first place there is a certain point of view one takes (i.e. seeing and accordingly thinking about someone as an object) which is reflected in how one speaks about someone (i.e. speaking about someone as an object). Language shapes the thoughts about and the understanding and concepts of the world and has a great impact on how the world is thought of and viewed; this also holds true the other way round (Schrecker et al., 1997, p. 66; Jepson, 2008, p. 129; Veilleux, 2014, p. 45). Our language does not only reflect but also shapes our percep-

tion of someone (Hauskeller, 2007, p. 77), highlighting certain aspects of him/her while obscuring others (Jepson, 2008, p. 130) thereby facilitating the process of objectification (Hauskeller, 2007, p. 77). To speak of animals as living 'things', already implies the view of them as objects rather than beings, even if the word 'living' still remains in this oxymoron (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 118). Language hence is an important tool of objectification as "a subject is first [...] objectified, through metaphor" (Adams, 2010[1990], p. 73).[27] These ways of acting (i.e. making someone into a thing) are followed by actually treating someone as an object (i.e. treating someone as a thing) and hence can be seen as steps leading towards or even parts of objectifying treatment of others, as Nussbaum (1995, p. 257) states, "objectification entails *making* into a thing, *treating* as a thing, something that is really not a thing". The forms of denial discussed within this work can be seen as distinct forms of treatment. In chapter 2.4 the definition of objectification by psychologist Joy (2011[2010]) was given, who describes objectification only as viewing someone as something. Even though the aspect of treating – as a result of viewing someone as something – is essential to her theory, in her definition she seems to neglect this facet. This is why I will stick to the more elaborate definition given by Nussbaum (1995).

In chapter 2, objectification of animals was described as a mechanism meat consumers use to overcome the dissonance generated by their ambivalent treatment of animals. Wilkie (2005, p. 228), however, points out that this conflict is not restricted to the consumers, but also talks about a productive paradox:

> "what is common to livestock producers, consumers and food policy makers is their respective management of personal and public ambivalence. Ultimately, the bottom line for representatives of these groups is the extent to which they choose to reconnect with, or disconnect from, this obvious but potentially problematic productive paradox".

After having seen Nussbaum's (1995) detailed definition, it becomes clear that the actual treatment of animals is an important part of objectification and we are well aware that in today's society with its current production systems, meat eaters themselves hardly ever come into contact with live animals used for meat production which makes face-to-face interaction impossible. Accordingly, a (simplified) distinction between meat producers (i.e. people involved in the production process who are in regular 'personal' contact with live animals) and meat consumers (i.e. people who do only come in contact with dead animals) can be made. While most of the meat producers are also meat consumers, most of

[27] A detailed analysis of the role of language in human-animal relationship is given by Stibbe (2001).

the meat consumers are not meat producers. Nevertheless, the objectifying acts towards the live animal carried out by the producer are a sign that consumers use objectification for justifying eating the dead animal as the multilayered definition of objectification given by Nussbaum (1995) demonstrates: by recognising the acts of speaking, seeing, and thinking as components of objectification we can see that the consumer as an active part of society contributes to the practices of the current production system, even though he/she is not the one who acts towards the animals 'manually'. By accepting and supporting objectifying treatment of animals taking place in the current mode of meat production via the mechanism of demand (DeGrazia, 2002, p. 74; Mitchell, 2011, p. 43; Dirscherl, 2015, p. 325; Fitzgerald, 2015, p. 24), he/she becomes part of the objectifying logic involved in the issue of meat. While it is the producer who in practice, directly acts towards animals in an objectifying way, the consumer more indirectly acts in similar ways by displaying a certain attitude of speaking, seeing, and thinking about animals in an objectifying manner. Therefore, regardless of the fact that in Western industrialised countries production and consumption are disconnected[28], the bigger picture of the issue of meat has to be seen. When animals are objectified within the related processes, all the components of objectification manifesting in acts of speaking, seeing, thinking are present and result in a certain kind of treatment. If there was no consumer to demand the products and support the current mode of production, no such large-scale production system would be operated. The actual consumption of the already dead animal, i.e. the meat, then is the expression of an objectification that has happened in the first place. There might be differences in the details between the objectifying treatment of animals carried out by the consumer and the one carried out by the producer, yet they all are part of one society involved in the objectification of animals; as Hauskeller (2007, p. 73) points out, not only do common societal practices have an influence on the way society views those who are affected by such practices and potentially even change these views, but also does the way society looks at them determine the role they are assigned in these practices.

All seven signposts of objectification proposed by Nussbaum (1995, p. 257) will now be elaborated on. For each of them, first Nussbaum's (1995) definition of the characteristic will be given and then the characteristic in question will be transferred to animals by giving practical examples of pork production.[29] The reason why all practical insights

[28]For more detailed information on this disconnection see Fitzgerald, 2015.

[29]This work's focus is put on the objectification of animals used for meat production and hence the examples are only taken from this area of human-animal interaction. The work will not examine animal objectification taking place in other contexts of human-animal interaction (e.g. animal experimentation), even though beyond all question they would represent interesting topics as well.

given will refer to pigs and the humans' actions towards these animals is that the only purpose for keeping them in a commercial manner is the production of meat, in contrast to cattle or poultry where husbandry purposes also include production of other aliments like milk or eggs. Products other than pork, which is a popular and frequently consumed kind of food, only 'accidentally' accrue in the pig industry; these by-products are further processed and used in order to maximise efficiencies and production (e.g. leather, glue, etc.; Fitzgerald, 2015, p. 22). The examples will provide insight into common production practices of Western industrialised countries.[30] The effort is made to reformulate every single one of Nussbaum's (1995) seven signposts of objectification as a denial to further emphasise that the essence of objectifying treatment is denial as identified in chapter 2.

3.1.2 Instrumentality: denying animals to be an end in itself

The first notion involved in objectifying treatment is *instrumentality*, meaning that "the objectifier treats the object as a tool of his or her purposes"[31] (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257).

Applied to animals this means that *the animal is treated as an instrument for somebody else's purposes.*

When looking at meat production, such instrumentalisation is certainly the case (Gottwald, 2015, p. 137). Since it is the animal's body itself that is consumed as meat after the animal's death, the animal is used as an instrument for the humans' purpose of obtaining meat. He/she is seen and treated as a mere tool for meat production (DeGrazia, 2002, p. 71). In contrast to other uses of animals (e.g. guide dogs), the instrumentalisation of animals used for meat production is a special case as the animals have to die in order to fulfil the intended function.

[30] As there are only very slight, negligible variations in the details of pork production between the single countries (e.g. concerning legislation), the description of the examples applies to the whole Western industrialised world. Sometimes – when deemed necessary – the situation in some countries will be mentioned explicitly.

[31] I am wondering why Nussbaum (1995, p. 257) by formulating the seven signposts always uses the phrase "the objectifier treats the object as ...", as if it was already an object, she is talking about. In fact, what she says she intends to do is to describe "seven ways to treat a person as a thing" (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 256) and hence in my opinion the sentences should start with 'the objectifier treats the person as ...'. If she, on the other hand, with her seven signposts firstly wants to show how things are treated to later apply it to the objectifying treatment of humans, then it is unclear why she would name the one who is doing the treatment 'the objectifier'. Talking of an objectifier already implies objectifying treatment, which is of course not possible in the case of things, as Nussbaum (1995, p. 257) herself states: "Each of these is a feature of our treatment of things [...] treating things as objects is not objectification". In this case then 'the person treats the objects as ...' would be more logical.

Considering the practical example of pigs, we can see that these animals are bred, reproduced, fattened, and slaughtered for the single purpose of supplying humans with meat. The apparatus behind pork production is enormous and because of practical and economical reasons there is a high degree of division of labour between the farms involved. Only very few pig farms keep the animals from birth until slaughter (Groskreutz & Roth, 1978, p. 37; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 126). Most farms are specialised in one part of production: (a) farms producing piglets who are then sold to be raised and slaughtered (Groskreutz & Roth, 1978, p. 37), (b) farms rearing piglets from the point of weaning until they are fit for fattening (Hoy et al., 2006, pp. 126, 133), and (c) fattening farms receiving the piglets either from (a) or (b) (Groskreutz & Roth, 1978, p. 37; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 126). What becomes apparent here is that the whole pig business does not only instrumentalise those pigs who are actually the ones to be fattened and slaughtered, but also the boars and sows used for breeding and reproduction. If they were not instrumentalised too, it would not be possible to fulfil the purpose of the industry. As 'pass-through items', they are used merely as a means to the end of meat production.

The fact that all these animals involved – from the breeding sow to the finishing pig – are used as instruments of the meat industry can furthermore be seen in the standards according to which the animals are assessed. Sows are selected for their fertility (Schmitten, 1989c, p. 50), boars have to show good sperm quality (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 248), and the fattening pigs are evaluated according to their meat performance and quality (Schmitten, 1989c, p. 98) with economic factors being paramount, as emphasised in scientific literature (e.g. Schmitten, 1989c, pp. 50, 95).

The biological advantages of this species are made use of in production in order to receive a high yield at relatively low costs and hence optimally exploit what the 'instrument pig' can provide us with. These characteristics of pigs are mainly their short generation interval, their polyestrous sexual cycle, and their high prolificacy (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 229). Sows usually farrow for the first time at the age of one year (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 229) after a gestation period of about 115 days (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 101; Hoy, 2009, p. 107; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 6) delivering about ten to twelve piglets per litter (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 229). Since these animals can farrow at any time of the year, a sow can have 2–2.4 litters a year producing about 18–22 piglets (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 229). After the lactation period of about 28 days on average (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 67; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 6) the piglets are weaned and the sow comes into heat again only about four to eight days later (Schmitten, 1989c, p. 52). So all in all, the production cycle of a sow (i.e. the time interval between two farrowing events) is about 148, but can be up to 165 days (Schmitten, 1989b, p. 209; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 6),

and the productivity of a single sow in terms of piglets as potential meat source is already quite high. Since the goal of the meat industry – as of every other one – is to keep production levels high and optimise the capacity of their instruments, certain management measures are taken, e.g. shortening the lactation period or stimulating sows to come into heat again quite shortly after weaning (Schmitten, 1989c, pp. 52–53).

The productive period of a sow is called her 'useful life', i.e. from the first farrowing until she drops out of the stock, and can also be expressed in terms of the number of litters over her lifetime at the farm (usually about four to five litters; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 152). As soon as the sow's fertility decreases, she is no longer a cost-effective instrument for the farm and hence is culled (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 67). If a sow displays reproductive failure, she is culled too (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 104), even if her useful life was not intended to be this short. In cases where veterinary care is provided, this is only done with the goal to restore the proper 'functioning' of the animal as production unit (Grimm et al., 2016, p. 81). In general, culling represents what Grimm et al. (2016, p. 81) make clear when they state that death in agricultural business represents the beginning of inefficient production rather than the natural ending of life.

Piglets grow rapidly (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 229). Weighing about 1.4 kg at birth (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 229), they are weaned at 6–8 kg and raised in groups until they reach a weight of 25–28 kg at about ten weeks of age (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 137); then the actual fattening period starts (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 133).

The fattening pig (who is either a female or a castrated male) is a very clear example of how animals are used as instruments by humans. He/she is only brought into existence by humans in order to fulfil their wish to eat meat. As no method to produce meat artificially on a large scale has been found to still humans' desire for flesh on their plates, there is no other way than to industrially produce, keep, and slaughter animals to obtain this kind of food. The pig himself/herself hence is an unavoidable part of the production, that cannot be skipped. The Austrian regulations of the keeping of animals further underlines the common view of these pigs as instruments as it defines fattening pigs as pigs determined for slaughter, from the age of ten weeks until they are butchered (Österreichische Tierhaltungsverordnung, 2004, Anlage 5/1.). The single meaning of these animals admitted to them by humans is their existence as a means of meat consumption. As put straight by Hoy et al. (2006, p. 125), the goal of pig fattening is the provision of pigs ready for slaughter who fulfil the demand of the market. Pig fattening hence is about producing "high-quality, nutritious, and safe pork for the consumer", as Battaglia (2007[1998], p. 282) explains for the American pork market, a statement that is certainly true for pig farmers in all Western industrialised countries.

Furthermore, literature shows that the focus is primarily put on economic aspects of fattening, putting issues like a species-appropriate environment, etc. on the back burner. Extra effort put into the feeding of pigs in the first days of the fattening period, for example, is said by one author to be a good investment into proper fattening (Burgstaller, 1989, p. 187), without uttering a word on the necessity of careful feed adjustment in terms of pig welfare. The same is true when authors mention the downside of keeping pigs in larger groups (because of advantages concerning the production process) only as a threat to a decline in performance (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 37), neglecting that this often also leads to diminished animal welfare, because of a decrease in individual care.

In the end, when fattening pigs are brought to the slaughterhouse, their *instrumentality* is sealed not only by their untimely, human-induced death, but also by the evaluation of their carcass. Besides the weight and length of the carcass, the quality and composition of the dead pig's body are assessed (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 189). It is important to note, however, that in some instances, these parameters are already evaluated in the live animal by means of sonography (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 190) also pointing to the instrumental character these animals are ascribed. These objective measurements serve as a basis to calculate the price per kilogram of the carcass the farmer gets paid in the end (Schmitten, 1989c, p. 61; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 190).

These examples clearly show that the overarching theme of the lives of these animals is their *instrumentality* as a 'meat resource' and that they are merely treated as "units of production and potential profit" (D'Silva, 2006, p. 53). They only have a place in this world because of their utility for humans and do not have one any longer if they are of no use any more – the relatively little protection they are accorded is because of the human interest in the use of the 'end-product' (Longo & Malone, 2006, p. 114; Tischler, 2010, p. 257; Grimm, 2016, pp. 43, 55; Grimm et al., 2016, p. 81). The perception of pigs as mere instruments is underlined by the fact that these animals are even referred to by their use (Jepson, 2008, p. 155), e.g. as 'fatteners' or 'porkers', instead of what they are in the first place, namely 'pigs'.

Using an animal as an instrument for meat production can hence be seen as a *denial of being an end in itself*[32], in a sense that they are not able to live a life without being the tool for the fulfilment of somebody else's purposes.

[32]In the context of human beings Nussbaum (1995, p. 265) also uses the formulation of denying someone the status of being an end in himself/herself when it comes to instrumentalisation.

3.1.3 Denial of autonomy, ownership: denying animals their preference autonomy

The second notion involved in objectifying treatment is *denial of autonomy*, meaning that "the objectifier treats the object as lacking in autonomy and self-determination" (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257).

Applied to animals this means that *the animal is treated as something that has no autonomy and self-determination.*

The sixth notion involved into the objectifying treatment is *ownership*, meaning that "the objectifier treats the object as something that is owned by another, can be bought or sold, etc." (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257).

Applied to animals this means that *the animal is treated as something that is somebody else's property, including buying and selling it.*

The reason why this chapter combines the second and the sixth notion, which Nussbaum (1995) originally lists as distinct, lies in the fact that the latter can – at least in the animal context – be seen as subordinated to the former. Both of them seem to come down to the same denial present in objectification, as will be outlined in the following paragraphs. Before an explanation of *ownership* as falling within *denial of autonomy* can be provided, the meaning of the concepts 'autonomy' and 'ownership' have to be clarified and analysed in terms of meat production.

A classical interpretation of autonomy which ties it to moral agency[33] has been formulated by Immanuel Kant (1968[1785], pp. 434–435) and is rooted in his understanding of autonomy as the ability to act morally. This is not possible in the case of animals in a straightforward sense as understanding morality in animals in the same way as in humans

[33]The terms 'moral agent' and 'moral patient' are used to describe the individuals of a moral community. A moral community consists of individuals that have to be considered morally; all these individuals are called moral patients (Bossert, 2016, p. 94). A part of these individuals, however, does possess certain abilities (e.g. reason) that makes it possible to hold these individuals morally accountable for what they do or refrain to do; they are called moral agents (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 86; Bossert, 2016, p. 94). The other part of the individuals of the moral community remain to be 'mere' moral patients and cannot be held morally responsible for their actions (Bossert, 2016, p. 94) because of a lack of these essential abilities. Therefore, not all moral patients are moral agents, but all moral agents are necessarily moral patients (Bossert, 2016, p. 94). The two groups hence overlap but are not congruent (Bossert, 2016, p. 94).

is questionable.[34] According to animal ethicist Regan (2004[1983], pp. 84–85), however, Kant (1968[1785], pp. 434–435) does not provide the only way of looking at autonomy and hence he sees a possibility to attribute autonomy to animals. Regan (2004[1983], pp. 84–85) therefore does so by defining a more basal form of autonomy certain animals, including the ones used for meat production, do possess, namely 'preference autonomy':

> "individuals are autonomous if they have preferences and have the ability to initiate action with a view to satisfying them. It is not necessary [...] that one be able to abstract from one's own desires, goals, and so on, as a preliminary to asking what any other similarly placed individual ought to do; it is enough that one have the ability to initiate action because one has those desires or goals one has and believes, rightly or wrongly, that one's desires or purposes will be satisfied or achieved by acting in a certain way".

In contrast to Kant (1968[1785], pp. 434–435), Regan (2004[1983], pp. 84–85) does not focus on the prerequisite of moral agency but on the prerequisite of preferences when it comes to the question of whether an individual is autonomous. It is therefore possible to also talk about autonomy in the context of animals who have preferences but are not moral agents and hence to uncouple the two concepts of autonomy and moral agency (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 199). Animals that have preference autonomy are able to act self-determinedly with the goal of reaching the fulfilment of their desires. They are able to initiate intentional action (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 74).

Following this modified version of autonomy, it becomes obvious that animals used for meat production do not only possess preference autonomy but are also deprived of it by being incorporated into the meat industry. Within the common system of meat production, animals are largely unable to act autonomously in terms of shaping their lives. Even in husbandry conditions where animals are allowed their freedom to a greater degree (e.g. free-ranging systems), they are nonetheless restricted by the fact that they are held in captivity (DeGrazia, 1996, p. 281; D'Silva, 2006, p. 55). They cannot autonomously follow their preferences; this concerns their food preferences, mating preferences, preferences regarding their movements and the places they want to reach, etc., to name only some examples (Steiger, 2002, p. 226). These animals are restricted by heteronomy in contrast to living their lives in full autonomy (Balluch, 2015, p. 53).

[34] There is, however, a relatively newly emerging research field at the interface of biology and philosophy that investigates modified forms of morality in animals and has already found incidents indicative of moral acting in animals (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2015, pp. 246–248). For more information on this topic see Bekoff and Pierce (2009), de Waal (2009), Rowlands (2012a), and Monsó Gil (2016).

In the case of pigs, the withdrawal of preference autonomy becomes remarkably clear. Their autonomous actions are severely restricted in several different areas by the predetermined conditions they find themselves in. In the following paragraphs, some examples will be given.

The housing of pigs in general is relatively intensive with usually no possibility to go outside. They are kept indoors in cramped conditions in mostly unstructured stables. This is especially true for those fattening units in which large groups of pigs are kept in strawless pens with fully slatted floors and a combined lying and dunging area (Hammer & Mittrach, 1989, p. 252; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 128). From an ethological point of view this is problematic as pigs usually leave the group to urinate and defecate in distinct places and strictly separate the lying area from the dunging area (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 128; Hoy, 2009, p. 122). Whereas the main advantage of this system are good pig performances (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 233) and a high degree of hygiene and cleanliness of the animals because of the self-cleaning effect of such floors (i.e. drainage of urine and faeces directly into the underlying manure system; Hammer & Mittrach, 1989, p. 253; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 128; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 233), this unstructured environment exhibiting a lack of proper enrichment (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 129) clearly limits the autonomous actions of pigs (e.g. leaving one area to reach another one, visiting a bedded site to rest, choosing certain materials to manipulate) and can even contribute to the development of abnormal behaviour (Hoy, 2009, p. 136). A lack of proper bedding and enrichment are listed as welfare issues in modern pig production (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93) and the Austrian regulations of the keeping of animals prescribe minimum requirements concerning enrichment material for pig housing (Österreichische Tierhaltungsverordnung, 2004, Anlage 5/2.7.). Other housing systems designed in ways that are structured into different areas (e.g. pens with partially slatted floors; Hammer & Mittrach, 1989, pp. 254–255; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 128; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 216) and even more those that involve the provision of straw (e.g. deep litter systems; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 128) offer the animals more options to autonomously act according to their preferences, meaning that they can decide which areas they want to visit and which behavioural sequences they want to carry out at any given moment.

The housing conditions have certain effects on the pigs, which eventually evoke autonomous actions of the animals in an effort to escape the situation; they often do, however, at the same time restrict the animals in carrying out such behaviour. For example, if the temperature in pig housing is not properly regulated, the welfare of the animals is impaired (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93) as they experience stress (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 230). Because of the confinement, however, they are not able to flee the situation

or initiate other behaviour counter-acting this negative state, like wallowing in a muddy pool (Hoy, 2009, p. 129). The same is true for effects of certain flooring (e.g. concrete floors, slippery corners, inappropriate gap widths in slatted pens) that can result in sole bruising, foot tenderness, lameness, and leg bone fractures (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 106). Confined in the pens, pigs, however, cannot autonomously initiate action, like looking for other, more comfortable substrates they would prefer to stand, walk, and lie on. The pigs' autonomy is thus impaired not only in general by the housing conditions, but also because the housing conditions themselves cause welfare problems whose solution would require the possibility to act autonomously.

Limited space and constriction of movement in pig husbandry systems are especially relevant in sow housing. During gestation, sows are often kept in so-called 'sow stalls' or 'gestation crates' which are longish metal enclosures that confine the animals at minimum space, not even allowing them to turn around or to fully stretch out their legs when lying down (Weaver & Morris, 2004, pp. 51, 52). Even though the use of such gestation crates has been limited to a certain period in the production cycle (e.g. European Union) or even banned (e.g. Switzerland), in some countries they are still used for the whole duration of pregnancy (e.g. US State of Indiana). Shortly before parturition, sows are usually brought to so-called 'farrowing crates', which are similar to gestation crates with the exception that they are placed in a farrowing pen, where the piglets can move freely, and stay there until weaning (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 235; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 100). This is done to reduce piglet mortality because of piglet crushing by the mother sow (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 94), which is not only named as one of the main welfare concerns in pig production (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93) but also as an economic issue (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 99). Overlying of piglets by the sow is one of the most important reasons for the loss of live born piglets (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 107) in intensive husbandry conditions (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 95) whereby the piglets usually die of suffocation under the sow within two hours (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 106). Since the pens in commercial pig husbandry are usually so small that sows are unable to carry out a regular behaviour pattern coordinating the piglets to minimise the risk of overlying them, they are forced to skip this behavioural sequence and rather quickly slide downwards along the pen wall which often does not leave enough time for the piglet to escape (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 95). Therefore, in order to maximise efficiency and still produce in the smallest space possible, farrowing crates were introduced. They are equipped with guardrails guiding the sow during lying down to prevent piglets from being lain on (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 100). The side grid of the farrowing crate, however, is open, so that the piglets can reach the teats of the sow (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 100). While this system reduces piglet mortality,

the sow is severely constricted in several respects: she is not able to move freely or to exercise (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 100; Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 94) during the whole period of confinement and is not allowed to carry out species-specific behaviour, such as nest building before farrowing (D'Silva, 2006, p. 55; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 100; Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 94) or walking away to defecate or urinate distant from the nest (Hoy, 2009, p. 122). After farrowing she is severely limited in her interaction with the piglets (D'Silva, 2006, p. 55; Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 94). Apart from other welfare problems such as skin and foot lesions (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, pp. 95, 106), she is also heavily impaired in her autonomous actions according to her preferences around the time of farrowing and nursing. In some countries (e.g. Switzerland) farrowing crates have been banned and replaced by farrowing pens of a size which allows sows to at least turn around (Schweizer Tierschutzverordnung, 2008, 3. Abschnitt, Art. 50). Other alternative farrowing systems that make so-called 'free farrowing' possible do exist, but they are not widely used for economic reasons. As a social species, pigs are kept in groups. This is not only true for pregnant sows in the European Union, from the fifth week after insemination on until seven days prior to farrowing (EU Council Directive 2008/120/EC, 2009, Article 3/4.), but also for fattening pigs. Such groups, however, are artificially built by the stockperson. In combination with a strictly limited space this prescribed composition of the group inhibits autonomous actions of the pigs with regard to the choice of their social partners, especially as they do not have many opportunities to escape pen mates they do not want to be close with and they cannot keep their individual distance. In the case of sows this may even be aggravated when kept in dynamic groups. In contrast to stable groups, these groups do not have a steady composition as management requires the farmer to regularly remove sows and put others in, according to their current reproductive state (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 93; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 48). This disturbance of social stability within the group (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 93; Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 100; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 48) inhibits autonomous actions in a way that sows' long-term interactions with each other are regularly disrupted and their complex relationships with each other (Hoy, 2009, p. 114) are compromised. Further, regular mixing leads to frequent aggressive interactions (lasting from half a minute as long as twelve minutes and especially taking place within the first two days; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 74; Hoy, 2009, pp. 111, 113) as social rank has to be established anew each time which is of great concern for animal welfare (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93) and can lead to serious injuries (e.g. of the vulva; Hoy, 2009, p. 111). Fattening pigs are kept in artificially composed groups (Hammer & Mittrach, 1989, p. 249) of about 15 to 60 animals in one pen (with a trend towards larger groups of as many as 1500 animals; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 132; Gregory & Grandin, 2007,

p. 105), with several pens building one unit of about 600 animals (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 128). Since these pens do not provide a lot of space, crowded conditions in fattening pens can be found which restrict the animals' free movement and hence their autonomous decision of where (e.g. to which area) and how (e.g. at which speed) to move. Correspondingly, high stocking density is a relevant welfare issue in pig production (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93) which can lead to infectious crowding disease (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 38) and be a predisposing factor for abnormal behaviour (Hoy, 2009, p. 136).

Modern pig production also affects mating behaviour as intensive production does not usually allow for a natural mating process between sows and boars, but has artificial insemination made more prominent over the last few decades (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 77). The animals cannot autonomously decide whether, when and where to mate, but insemination has become a management-determined process. Artificial insemination describes the rather easy process of collecting semen from the male pig and then inseminating the female pig with it (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 231). This procedure has significant advantages for the producer, like using the semen of one boar across different farms (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 78), better timing of actual fertilisation (Schmitten, 1989b, p. 205), being cost-effective, optimally using the genetic material (as many as 25 sows can be inseminated with only one ejaculate; Schmitten, 1989c, p. 53), keeping lesser boars at the farm, using boars for a longer time, mating heavy boars with young or small sows, etc. (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 280). For sows, this management measure, however, strongly prohibits her to act autonomously; confined during the process, she is unable to defend herself against this intervention. As the semen used for artificial insemination is obtained from boars by having them mount a dummy and collecting their semen either with the help of a human's hand, an artificial vagina, or by automatic means (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 204), the boars' autonomy in terms of sexual acting is also restricted.

When it comes to nutrition, pigs are exposed to the management decisions of the stockperson. Under the conditions of modern pig farming, the animals cannot autonomously decide what they are going to eat (as pigs usually choose their feed according to its taste; Hoy, 2009, p. 119), nor when they are going to eat (if feed is only provided at certain feeding times). Furthermore, the behavioural need to forage and root (Hoy, 2009, p. 116) cannot be carried out due to the form of the administered food (e.g. shred, corn) and the housing conditions (e.g. indoor housing on concrete floor). Even though the use of automatic feeding systems ensures an individual supply of feed, displacement of animals among each other as well as aggressive interactions are common and the pigs' need to engage in synchronised feeding behaviour is neglected (Hoy, 2009, p. 115). The amount of food can pose a problem too. Especially in pregnant sows hunger is considered a welfare

issue (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93) because restrictive feeding should prevent the animals from becoming fat, but at the same time supply them with enough energy; this does, however, not always lead to satiety and can result in frustration and aggression in sow groups housed indoors (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 100). Failures in feed composition, preparation, administration, inappropriate feed as well as feed that has gone bad, etc. can support the development of abnormal behaviour (Hoy, 2009, p. 136) and lead to serious health problems (Matzke, 1989, p. 311; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 78). Efforts to optimise feed in terms of its digestibility have also led to the development of gastric ulcers (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, pp. 106–107), an important welfare issue in pigs (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93). In line with other examples for the *denial of preference autonomy* in pigs feeding also shows that these animals are dependent on what they are provided with in their particular husbandry system without having the possibility to act autonomously in this area of life.

Last but not least, the transport of pigs should be mentioned because it is a very striking example of refusing the animals their autonomy. At least once in their lives, pigs are usually transported from one place to another (e.g. from their place of birth to the fattening farm or from the farm to the abattoir). Transport and lairage stress (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93) as well as serious injuries during transport and loading are a threat to the animals' welfare (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 106). With the act of loading an animal on a vehicle and determining his/her movement and destination, his/her autonomy is totally neglected. Pigs can no longer autonomously act with regard to their movement. They are not able to defy this action and hence are literally delivered.

It is becoming clear through these examples that animals used for meat production – especially pigs – are deprived of their ability to act autonomously in terms of their preferences. Having defined autonomy in a way that views animals as having the ability to act self-determinedly in order to satisfy their desires (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 74), *ownership* can be identified as a factor that hinders animals to fully act in this way.

It is a distinct characteristic of the meat production system, that all animals involved are owned by humans, e.g. farmers, or institutions established and managed by humans, e.g. corporations (Schrecker et al., 1997, p. 68; Ibrahim, 2007, p. 93). Accordingly, these people can decide the animals' fate and arbitrarily sell or buy them (Schrecker et al., 1997, p. 68) and the preferences that the animal could theoretically autonomously pursuit are thereby suppressed, which yet again portrays the idea of animals as commodities (see also chapter 1.1). The animals' status as property is permitted by the law (Francione, 2004,

p. 51) and the fact that people commonly talk about animals as being sold, bought, and owned underlines that it is considered common sense that animals are property (Stibbe, 2001, p. 151).

In the practice of pig husbandry and meat production, it becomes obvious that the animals (no matter whether boar, sow, piglet, or fattener) are treated in a way that humans are their possessors. There are certain working groups, breeder's associations, and marketing organisations (Schmitten, 1989a, p. 115; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 133) that act as intermediaries between buyers and sellers (Schmitten, 1989a, p. 115). They usually organise events (e.g. shows, breed-type conferences, auctions, etc.; Schmitten, 1989a, p. 115; Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 267) where pig owners can present and trade 'their' animals to the prospective possessors or have them examined for breed certification (Schmitten, 1989a, p. 115). Thereby, the economic interests are paramount (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 267). The animals' economically important traits (e.g. daily weight gain, feed conversion, etc.) are listed in catalogues and owners try to make animals look their best so that potential buyers can thoroughly examine them (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 267). Additionally, voluntary associations of producers have been established to help optimise the economic efficiency of the business (Schmitten, 1989a, p. 116). These groups and events clearly show that pigs are owned and that trading them in an organised context (ensuring correct informations about origin, pedigree, health status, etc.) plays a key role in economic pig production (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 133).

In this sense, the animal loses his/her individual freedom to make decisions on his/her actions as the decisions the owner makes automatically influence the animal's scope of actions. *Ownership* can hence be seen as part of the deprivation to act autonomously with regard to one's preferences which is underlined by Nussbaum's (1995, p. 264) quote that "ownership is by definition incompatible with autonomy".

Hence, in the case of animals used for meat production, a *denial of preference autonomy* takes place to make these individuals fit a system that fulfils the culinary preferences of human beings.

3.1.4 Inertness

The third notion involved in objectifying treatment is *inertness*, meaning that "the objectifier treats the object as lacking in agency, and perhaps also in activity" (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257).

Applied to animals this means that *the animal is treated as something that is inert, lacking in agency and eventually also in activity.*

The question here is how *inertness* is to be understood. Following Nussbaum's (1995) definition, *inertness* can be split up into a lack of agency as well as a lack of activity. Both of the concepts will now be analysed in more detail in order to evaluate them within the animal context.

Agency per se is a complex topic and rather hard to define (see also McFarland & Hediger, 2009; Roscher, 2016). Even where humans are concerned, the concept is of confusion and discussions about it often end up with contradictory results, not least because of its association with several other terms (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 962). These terms are often enough themselves not easy to grasp and include, for example, free will, rationality, mind, subjectivity, etc. (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 962; McFarland & Hediger, 2009, p. 3; Bossert, 2016, p. 94). Furthermore, differing opinions on the concept of agency between the disciplines of philosophy and sociology contribute to the problem of a clear interpretation of it (Kurth et al., 2016, p. 9).

Since agency is such a vague construct even in humans, applying it to animals poses a lot of difficulties (Kurth et al., 2016, p. 13) and it is hence a rarely discussed topic (Kurth et al., 2016, p. 11). It can, however, on a very basic level be seen as the mere potential to act. Therefore, agency is closely connected to the real acting, namely the activity of an individual, which is probably why Nussbaum (1995, p. 257) has combined agency and activity within one characteristic. Any individual that is able to act in one way or another hence automatically possesses agency. This, however, does not necessarily mean that this acting is done consciously or intentionally. Agency, in the sense it is understood within this work, only describes the potential to act and this certainly applies to animals used for meat production.

Activity of an individual can be understood in different ways. Besides the intentional acts carried out by autonomous beings, there is also mere physiological activity, including chemical activity, physical activity, etc. Interestingly, it is exactly this metabolic activity of the animals that is fundamental to meat production. If the animals did not display such kind of activity, i.e. if they did not gain weight and body mass, they would simply be useless for meat production.

Here, it is interesting to take a look back at what was said earlier about autonomy with the help of Regan's (2004[1983]) view (see chapter 3.1.3). Autonomy is closely connected to agency and activity, in the sense that it is also tightly connected to the acting of an individual. As outlined before, preference autonomy in animals is their ability to

determine in which way they will act in order to fulfil their goals. Consequently, to live autonomously, an individual does have to have agency (i.e. the potential to take action) and activity, and hence cannot be inert. Since it was found that animals used for meat production are capable of acting autonomously, these individuals also do have agency and levels of activity.

As the declared goal of large-scale pig husbandry is meat production, i.e. the building of muscle and fat tissue, the fattening pig's physiological activity of cell and tissue proliferation based on protein synthesis is (economically) crucial (Schmitten, 1989c, p. 58). During the fattening phase, the growth rate of the animals is the highest and hence can be optimally exploited (Schmitten, 1989c, p. 58). Several parameters are used to indicate the productivity of the fattening pigs (i.e. their meat performance) and to make clear how strongly this process relies on the physiological activity of the animals: meat performance is a combination of fattening performance (daily weight gain and feed conversion; Schmitten, 1989c, p. 56; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 137) and carcass value (composition and quality of the carcass; Schmitten, 1989c, p. 56). Currently, in the weight period between 25 kg and 120 kg weight, the daily weight gain of fattening pigs is about 750–850 g and the feed conversion is lower than 3 kg per kg weight gain (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 137). At the time of slaughter, pigs are about half a year old and usually weigh about 120 kg. The carcass weight is about 80–100 kg with a lean meat proportion of about 55 % (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 190). After slaughter, the dead animal's body is then classified based on its tissue composition (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 92) and therefore based on the physiological activity the pig displayed during his/her lifetime. In the European Union this is done according to the EUROP classification system in which the proportion of the muscular tissue decides which commercial category the carcass falls into. Ironically, the pigs are also often evaluated according to these categories when they are still alive, further pointing to their mere instrumental existence (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 135; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, pp. 61–62, 92).

It is important to keep in mind that activity understood in a physiological way does not only play a role in the straightforward sense of weight gain in pig fattening but also in the whole pig production system as without such activity boars and sows could neither mate nor piglets could be born. To guarantee efficiency in meat production systems, a high productivity of boars and sows is hence required (e.g. high quality of sperms, good fecundity; Groskreutz & Roth, 1978, p. 56; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 98; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, pp. 244, 248). If the animals do not comply with these high demands, they are culled.

At this point, we have to realise that the notion of *inertness* cannot be applied to animals used for meat production because agency as the potential to act is the basis for any kind of activity and hence not denied to the animal, but even made use of. The animals are therefore neither denied their agency – in the sense of a potential to act – nor their activity. Nevertheless, the aspect of intentional action that is connected to autonomy is denied to the animals, as we have seen in the previous chapter (see chapter 3.1.3). However, reaching this conclusion about *inertness* concerning animals used for meat production inevitably begs the question in what sense Nussbaum (1995) understands a denial of agency and activity in the case of humans. Since she does not explicitly define *inertness* – neither in general nor within her specific context – and does not give unambiguous examples, I personally doubt that this notion is useful in the analysis of objectification at all.

The economically-shaped parameters show the direct use of the animals' activity, clearly refusing the notion of *inertness*. Nussbaum's (1995) proposed third notion of objectification can therefore not be applied to animals, especially because her description lacks a more detailed identification of how the single terms of agency and activity are to be understood. Furthermore, her definition of *inertness* suggests that activity can take place without the prerequisite of agency, which is not in line with my understanding of the terms.

3.1.5 Fungibility: denying animals their individuality

The fourth notion involved in objectifying treatment is *fungibility*, meaning that "the objectifier treats the object as interchangeable (a) with other objects of the same type, and/or (b) with objects of other types" (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257).

Applied to animals this means that *the animal is treated as something that is interchangeable with an animal of the same kind or an animal of another kind.*

Leitsberger (2015, p. 20) suggests that an exchange of items always carries the question about their function and therefore views *fungibility* as exclusively occurring in connection to *instrumentality*. Nevertheless, within this thesis, the effort is made to approach the notion of *fungibility* from a broader perspective as already Nussbaum (1995, p. 288) sees a connection between the notions of *instrumentality* and *fungibility* but still lists them as two different phenomena. Actually, when examining the meaning of *fungibility* it seems that two aspects of this notion can be identified: *fungibility* of an item can on the one hand refer to its function for somebody else and on the other hand to its individual character. Both of these facets shall be explained shortly: as the common Latin origin 'fungi' of the two words 'fungibility' and 'function' suggests, their meaning is tightly connected and

fungibility often takes place regarding a certain function of an item. This is also what Hauskeller (2007, p. 71) points out concerning animals:

> "when it is suggested that animals are by their very nature replaceable they are already thought of as performing a certain function or having a certain use. We have an idea of what we want from them, how they should be like, what makes them good representatives of their kind. And this idea makes animals replaceable".

This meaning of *fungibility* is clearly associated with the notion of *instrumentality* (see chapter 3.1.2) as it is the function of an item that constitutes its instrumental character. Nonetheless, *instrumentality* and *fungibility* cannot hastily be combined into one notion of objectification, because firstly, there are forms of *instrumentality* that rule out *fungibility* and secondly *fungibility* is not only possible when *instrumentality* is present. The first argument can be made explicit looking at the following example: a famous violinist who is used to only playing his/her own violin, a unique model of its kind, will view this violin as irreplaceable because of its resonance, tonal quality, sound projection, etc. (see also Nussbaum, 1995, p. 264). The second argument that *fungibility* is not necessarily a matter of function, can be seen in what Joy (2011[2010]; see chapter 2.4.2) calls deindividualisation. According to this approach, it is the individual character of the item that is discussed as being fungible because in the course of deindividualisation it is the individual that disappears within the mass (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 119) and unrelated to its function is seen to be replaceable by any other item of its kind or of another kind (according to the context).

When we take a look at every-day farming practices, we can see that the first aspect of *fungibility* of the animals is a common characteristic of him/her. The main purpose of meat production is to gain meat by slaughtering animals after they have been properly fattened. Thereby the animal himself/herself is of minor importance as long as he/she provides the industry with enough meat of the desired quality in the end. The function of the animal is meat conformation, as we have seen in chapter 3.1.2. Since the individual in this sense has no significance in the process, he/she can easily be exchanged by another one as long as he/she fulfils the same function.

As the animals become fungible because of their function (i.e. in our case the production of meat for human consumption), their individuality gets lost. They are treated as renewable resources and after their death their place will be taken by other animals and then again by others and so on (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 345). The focus of interest lies on their meat and not on their individual traits. Even if certain traits of the animal are

remarked in one case or another, this is done in view of their productivity.

In intensive pig husbandry, as in many other modern animal production systems, pigs are easily exchanged if they do not fulfil their function properly. As already mentioned, sows are regularly culled at an early age if they do not perform at the required level and are replaced by other sows. One handbook about pig production (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 82), for example, stresses the value of early detection of pregnancy as this is the condition to decide whether the sow is kept at the farm or culled which clearly shows that the sow is reduced to her function and that the replacement of animals is considered common practice.

Similarly, this is also true for fattening pigs who are only evaluated by their function to gain weight and produce meat of good quality for consumption. Animal control in fattening units mainly focuses on production-relevant parameters, like feed and water intake (Schmitten, 1989b, p. 217). If the animals are weighed during the fattening period, this is only done to detect animals that are not performing well in order to consider early withdrawal of these pigs (Schmitten, 1989b, p. 217). But often the health status of pigs is assessed only when the animals are already dead (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 135). By looking at the carcass, diagnostic findings (e.g. pneumonia, pleurisy, abnormalities at the liver) can be informative of management problems (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 135). It is, however, paradoxical to talk about the health of dead animals. This strange practice once again illustrates the purely economic point of view that is representative for the animal industry: the status of the animals is only relevant in terms of productivity but not in terms of individual welfare.

The second aspect of *fungibility* which refers to deindividualisation is also common practice within animal farming. A very clear example is the common routine of identifying the animals by numbers instead of names (Witt-Stahl, 2004, p. 12; Joy, 2011[2010], p. 119). This in turn is a logical consequence of modern husbandry conditions in which the number of the animals is so large that the individual oftentimes gets lost in the mass (Kunzmann, 2007, p. 29). Individuals are therefore not recognised as such, but are only seen in terms of their group identity (Joy, 2011[2010], p. 119). They become "non-individuals with a kind of unified being that allows members of the species to be killed as if they were so much grass being mowed, interchangeable, simply replaced by another", as Shapiro (1989, p. 185) writes about deer. This quote, however, applies just as well to cows, pigs, and chickens used for meat production.

As previously stated (see chapter 3.1.3), fattening pigs are kept in relatively large groups and there is no profound knowledge of the individual by the stockperson. Farms with less than several hundred fatteners at a time were already uneconomic several years ago, as noted by Hammer and Mittrach (1989, p. 249), and hence large-scale farming is required today more than ever. Since it does not allow for individual recognition of the single animals, extensive (computerised) information systems are required to ensure precise herd management and the storage of information on the single pigs (e.g. biological data; Schmitten, 1989b, p. 212). Furthermore, as will be described in more detail in chapter 3.1.6, every single animal is marked with numbers via ear tags, ear notches, brands, or tattoos (Schmitten, 1989b, p. 212).

The fact that large fattening units are usually managed on an all in-all out-basis (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 118) also indicates that the animals are treated more as one homogeneous group than as single individuals within a group. Within this system the animals are housed together as a group within the same pen from the very beginning until the end of a certain production phase (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 10). After the animals have left the compartment it is fully cleaned and disinfected within one or two days and a new group of animals is brought in to start the same production phase (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 10). The 'all in–all out management' is efficient for animals with short production phases, like pigs, and is hence used for farrowing, rearing, and fattening units (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, pp. 10–11). Consequently, it is the groups that are managed and not the individual animals.

Since *instrumentality* is a fundamental part of the pig business (see chapter 3.1.2), the component of *fungibility* referring to the animals' function is prominent; however, the lack of appreciation of the single animal as a unique member of the group, for example, by refusing to give him/her a name, clearly points to the fact that his/her individuality in the sense of deindividualisation is neglected.

Therefore, what takes place in meat production is a *denial of individuality* of the animals involved, in the sense that they become fungible items regardless of their individual traits; this can be done with regard to their function, which then can be seen as a notion tightly connected to *instrumentality*, but is also possible in the sense of deindividualisation of an individual in a large group. In both cases, the animals are removed from their individual character.

3.1.6 Violability, denial of subjectivity: denying animals their sentience

The fifth notion involved in objectifying treatment is *violability*, meaning that "the objectifier treats the object as lacking in boundary-integrity, as something that it [sic!] is permissible to break up, smash, break into" (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257).

Applied to animals this means that *the animal is treated as something that is lacking in boundary-integrity.*

The seventh notion involved in objectifying treatment is *denial of subjectivity*, meaning that "the objectifier treats the object as something whose experience and feelings (if any) need not be taken into account"[35] (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257).

Applied to animals this means that *the animal is treated as something that is lacking subjective experiences and feelings.*

To make clear why these two notions are combined here, Nussbaum's (1995, p. 257) notion of *violability* has to be looked at critically. Since Nussbaum (1995) intends to describe characteristics of thing-like treatment of humans, this notion would suggest that things lack boundary integrity. This, however, is problematic as things are physically existent entities with clear boundaries that exhibit integrity as long as the object is intact. It seems that Nussbaum (1995, p. 257), to avoid the confusion arising at this point, deliberately adds a – however troublesome – phrase to her explanation, namely that a thing "is permissible to break up, smash, break into". In doing so, she normatively charges the neutrally meant description of the objectification signposts. The descriptions of the other notions as the treatment of a subject as an object implies that subjects and objects are neutrally distinguished by a characteristic that one has and the other does not have (i.e. being an instrument vs. not being an instrument, having autonomy vs. having no autonomy, being inert vs. not being inert, being fungible vs. not being fungible, being owned vs. not being owned). Concerning *violability*, however, this distinction is shifted onto another level, and the question suddenly becomes ethically connoted in a way that is suddenly no longer about the one being violable and the other being not violable, but about the one being permissibly violable and the other being not permissibly violable. Interestingly, the same is true for the *denial of subjectivity*, where the question shifts from

[35] What I find unclear in Nussbaum's (1995, p. 257) formulation of the seventh notion is why she uses the phrase 'if any', and only uses it with that notion. Logically, one can only treat an item as lacking a certain characteristic when this item actually possesses it. This, however, is then true for all notions and it would only be consistent to emphasise it when talking about the other ones as well; for example, 'The objectifier treats the object as lacking in autonomy and self-determination, *if it has any*'.

having subjectivity or having no subjectivity to having subjectivity that has to be taken into account or having subjectivity that has not to be taken into account. Despite the fact that the definition of *violability* hence is inconsistent with the other notions, it indicates that Nussbaum (1995) – at least partially – targets the aspect of sentience, which would make violating the boundary integrity of a human morally reprehensible. Sentience is defined as the potential to experience pleasure and pain, at physical as well as at psychological levels (Passantino, 2008, p. 70). At this point the connection to the seventh notion becomes evident as subjectivity is also (indirectly) described as the characteristic of having experiences and feelings by Nussbaum (1995, p. 257). Having the ability to experience (bodily) pain is significant when talking about boundary integrity.[36] Therefore, the fifth and the seventh notion proposed by Nussbaum (1995, p. 257) as distinct are combined here. Joining and rephrasing them as a *denial of sentience*, as the neglect of the potential to experience pleasure and pain on a bodily as well as a mental level, better matches the other notions as it can be used to distinguish subjects from objects and can help to neutrally define different forms of treatment before entering ethical terrain.

Since both of these notions target at the important concept of sentience, they are inextricably linked to each other. Sentient animals – and thus animals used for meat production in Western industrialised countries (EU Treaty, 2012, Article 13) – have an individual welfare, which means that they can fare well or ill depending on the circumstances they find themselves in (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 82; DeGrazia, 1996, pp. 39–40). Their welfare can be negatively affected by either physical or psychological harm (or both), whereby harm in this case is to be understood as an infliction, i.e. "acute or chronic physical or psychological suffering" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 94), which they are – as sentient beings – able to experience. The components of animal welfare interfere with and mutually affect each other and hence physical inflictions often involve psychological inflictions and vice versa. For example, study findings suggest that aversive treatment of animals that involves bodily pain (e.g. shocks with an electric device) leads to mental impairment, like chronic stress, in the animals (Gonyou et al., 1986, p. 276). Conversely, extreme stress diminishing mental welfare can, for example, physically manifest itself in gastric ulcers, as is known in fattening pigs (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 136).

The fact that animals are harmed on purpose in the process of meat production is without question (DeGrazia, 2002, p. 71; Williams, 2008, p. 376; Budolfson, 2016, p. 87).

[36]There are, however, aspects of boundary integrity that do not necessarily require sentience to be morally objectionable; for reasons of better intelligibility this will be discussed in more detail later (see chapter 3.2.2).

Even if we leave the question of whether death should be regarded as a harm for now (see chapter 3.2.1), there are several physically harmful, legally permitted (and sometimes even prescribed) interventions that are routinely carried out on the animal's body (DeGrazia, 2002, pp. 77–78; Steiger, 2002, p. 226). Furthermore, fear related to routine management procedures (DeGrazia, 1996, p. 281; Forkman et al., 2007, p. 340) or frustration because of hindrances in carrying out highly motivated behaviours (Désiré et al., 2002, p. 166) are only some examples of states that animals used for meat production commonly experience and that are elicited by modern husbandry, for example, due to too little knowledge of the stockperson or profit maximisation. In the following paragraphs, a few examples are given concerning pig husbandry. The first examples focus more on the physical inflictions of the animals, whereas the latter ones describe the psychological inflictions commonly found in practice. It has to be kept in mind, however, that both components are almost always involved and that a strict division of them is not possible, as explained earlier.

One husbandry measurement which is not only legally permitted but also obligatory in many industrialised countries is the permanent identification of animals by means of ear tagging. Even though it does not fall under the category of interventions in the Austrian regulations, it is a potentially painful procedure.[37] Ear tags should help the stockperson identify individuals, keep accurate animal records (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 249), and have a good overview over the pig group (Schmitten, 1989b, p. 212). Tagging is done by inserting a tag made out of plastic or metal into the pig's ear (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 249) with the help of a special needle or punch pliers (Schmitten, 1989b, p. 212). Ear tagging causes minor bleeding and the formation of a scab (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 250). Infections indicated by swelling and pus-like discharge can occur (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 250).

Another standard intervention in pig husbandry is the surgical castration of male fattening pigs (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 253), which is seen as one of the most important zootechnical measures taken in piglet producing units (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 108). It is tightly connected to the consumer's demand for tasty meat as meat from sexually mature, intact boars often displays a typical urine-like, faecal smell and taste, the so-called boar taint (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 110; Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 107) which is undesired by the meat eater. As most consumers find this an unpleasant sensory experience (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 110), its occurrence in meat is usually avoided, mostly

[37] Ear notching, branding, and tattooing are also used in pigs as a means of identification but will not be described in detail here. For more information on the topic see Battaglia (2007[1998], pp. 246–248, 250–253).

by castration.[38] During surgical castration, the two testicles of the male pig are removed (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 253) by squeezing and pulling them out of two small incisions and cutting their cords while the pig is held by the rear legs upside down (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 254; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 108). This is a painful procedure, especially if carried out without the administration of any anaesthetic (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 107), and is described as a welfare issue in pig production (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93). Local anaesthesia at least prevents the piglets from experiencing immediate pain, but does not alleviate any subsequently occurring inflammatory pain (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 107). It usually takes five to seven days until the wounds are healed completely (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 255). According to the Austrian regulations of the keeping of animals castration without any kind of anaesthesia or subsequent use of pain killers is justified as long as the piglet is not older than seven days and the procedure can be carried out by the farmer himself/herself (Österreichische Tierhaltungsverordnung, 2004, Anlage 5/2.10./4.). Advantages of such early castration are said to be the easier restraint of the piglet, a still relatively clean farrowing pen, less bleeding, quicker wound healing, and a smaller wound (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 253; Hoy et al., 2006, p. 111; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 108). In Austria, piglets older than a week have to be castrated by a veterinarian or any other trained person with the use of anaesthesia and pain killers (Österreichische Tierhaltungsverordnung, 2004, Anlage 5/2.10./4.).[39]

Tail docking is another bodily violation performed in pig husbandry that needs to be mentioned here because it is one done in order to reduce problems which have developed as a result of intensive husbandry. It is carried out in order to prevent tail biting (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 107), which is a relatively common form of abnormal behaviour that causes pigs to chew or bite on tails of pen mates and can occur in rearing piglets as well as fattening pigs (Groskreutz & Roth, 1978, p. 217; Matzke, 1989, p. 288; Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 243; Hoy, 2009, p. 136; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 192). Reasons for the emergence of tail biting are to be found in an unsuitable environment (Groskreutz & Roth, 1978, p. 218) and can be: unsatisfied suckling behaviour, large groups, slatted floors, lack of bedding material, lack of environmental enrichment, stress, bad air quality, excessive temperature fluctuations, feeding mistakes, high stocking densities, etc. (Groskreutz &

[38] Alternatives to the surgical castration, like the fattening of intact boars or immunocastration, do exist but are not implemented into practice to a noteworthy extent, partly because of legal constrictions, partly because of a lack of feasibility (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 111). Interestingly, the fattening of intact boars would even be more efficient than the fattening of the slower growing castrates (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 107); the consumers' demand for meat without the boar taint, however, dictates the market.

[39] In the year 2010, however, representatives of the pig industry voluntarily signed a declaration on a ban of surgical castration in the EU that should come into force by January 1, 2018 (EU Declaration, s.a., s.p.).

Roth, 1978, p. 218; Matzke, 1989, pp. 288–289; Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 243; Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 107; Hoy, 2009, p. 137; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 192). Since one predisposing factor for tail biting is too little space for the individual animal, this intervention is part of what Ibrahim (2007, p. 102) means when he states that animals are rather mutilated in order to hinder them from harming each other than provided with more space which would be economically inefficient. Whereas the beginning of such tail manipulation seems to be a harmless playing activity (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 192), it quickly develops into a behavioural problem leading to injury and possible infection with the risk of abscess formation in the animal's spine, his/her organs, and joints (Groskreutz & Roth, 1978, p. 217; Matzke, 1989, pp. 288–289; Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 243; Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 108; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 192). It is hence a major welfare issue in pig production (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93) but is also mentioned as an economically relevant behavioural abnormality because it can lead to total animal losses and be the reason for carcass condemnation (Matzke, 1989, p. 289; Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 108; Wähner & Hoy, 2009, p. 192). Pigs kept in non-confinement systems with access to pasture or outdoors usually do not show tail biting (Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 243). The causes for tail biting are hence clearly to be found in the intensive husbandry system and can be reduced and eliminated by controlling the underlying causes, like providing pigs with enrichment material to manipulate (e.g. straw, toys; Groskreutz & Roth, 1978, p. 218; Matzke, 1989, p. 289). A widespread reaction of stockpersons to tail biting, however, is tail docking, i.e. cutting off a part of the piglet's tail in the first days of his/her life (Groskreutz & Roth, 1978, p. 217; Matzke, 1989, p. 289; Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 243). This is, however, no reaction to the cause but merely to the symptoms (Wähner & Hoy, 2009, pp. 124–125, 192) and can lead to pigs starting to bite at the ears, vulva, or extremities of conspecifics (Groskreutz & Roth, 1978, p. 218; Matzke, 1989, p. 289). Tail docking is a potentially painful amputation and can involve acute, inflammatory and/or neuropathic pain (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, pp. 17–18), and has to be seen as a relevant welfare issue (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 93). Normally the wounds take seven to ten days to heal completely, but infections or irritations can occur because of an unhygienic environment as well as investigation of the wound by litter mates (Battaglia, 2007[1998], pp. 243–244).

As the examples show, several husbandry routines cause these sentient animals a considerable amount of (at least bodily) pain – if not even suffering – which means that these animals are harmed.

Looking at intensive pig production as it takes place in Western industrialised countries, the emotional life of the pigs is often denied and as a result of that, actions are (regularly) undertaken that violate the animals' mental health, as will be outlined in the following paragraphs. If mentioned at all, negative effects of such interventions are only talked about in terms of performance decreases.

As already outlined in chapter 3.1.3, pigs kept in groups are not only unable to decide with whom to share their pen, but they also cannot withdraw from certain conspecifics because of space limitations. This is important to mention because pigs actively associate in groups and socially organise themselves when given enough space and the opportunity to move around freely (Hemsworth, 2014, p. 271). Especially in the case of pregnant sows managed in dynamic groups, the social instability of this husbandry system leads to regular fights for rank and hence to increased levels of aggression (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 93) and injuries (e.g. at the vulva; Hoy, 2009, p. 111). Mixing these unfamiliar sows causes fear and social stress in the animals (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 102) which clearly represent psychological inflictions. This, however, is mainly mentioned in literature (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 74) as negatively influencing productivity traits, like fertility and embryonic survival. The Austrian regulations of the keeping of animals, though, prescribe that certain measures have to be taken to minimise aggression during grouping and in group housing in general (Österreichische Tierhaltungsverordnung, 2004, Anlage 5/2.9.; Anlage 5/5.3.). If there is too little space when social groups are to be newly established, this can contribute to abnormal behaviour in the animals (Hoy, 2009, p. 136). In groups of fattening pigs social stress can also appear. This is especially the case when group sizes are large and stocking densities high because of problems in establishing social rank, less social confidence, and high social pressure at feeders (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 105).

Furthermore, removing pigs from a stable group can also cause distress and thus psychological harm as it disrupts social bonds (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 181). In systems where piglets are kept in the same group from weaning until slaughter, mixing stress is minimised (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 105).

Disruption of social bonds also applies to cases where piglets are weaned quite early (i.e. at less than 19 days of age) in order to produce large and hungry piglets (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 104). In Austria weaning is allowed from an age of 28 days on, with exceptional cases of weaning at 19 days if piglets are brought into a special environment (Österreichische Tierhaltungsverordnung, 2004, Anlage 5/4.2.).

The author of a subject-specific text book for farmers also advises practitioners not to perform interventions like tail docking or castration within the farrowing pen or the surroundings as the sow might become aggressive towards the handler in an effort to

protect her piglets, especially when they squeal (Battaglia, 2007[1998], pp. 243, 253). The described reaction of the piglets as well as of the sow indicates the discomfort and stress they experience. The advice to take piglets away for these procedures, however, is primarily given in order to keep the stockperson safe – avoiding discomfort for the sow only seems to come in second place.

In modern pig production systems, interactions with the stockperson are usually negatively biased as due to time constraints and labour efficiency, opportunities for positive interactions have become rare and many routine interactions often contain aversive elements (Hemsworth, 2008, p. 277). In general, however, interactions (e.g. tactile, visual, auditory, etc.) can be perceived by the animal as positive (e.g. gentle stroking), as negative (e.g. hitting), or as neutral (e.g. the presence of a human without any active interaction, neither in a positive nor in a negative way; Hemsworth, 2008, p. 272). They hence add to the pig's subjective experience over his/her lifetime. Consequently, the animal connects certain feelings (e.g. comfort, fear, etc.) with the presence of a human being and reacts accordingly. A study conducted by Gonyou et al. (1986, pp. 271, 273), for example, has shown that groups of gilts, each assigned to different forms of human-animal interaction (i.e. positive, negative, aversive, and minimal treatment) for ten weeks responded to the imposed treatment already in the second week. Whereas the pigs in the positive treatment group (i.e. a human squatting down in the pen, allowing pigs to approach and eventually stroking them) actively approached the experimenter and initiated physical contact, the pigs in the aversive treatment group (i.e. a human shocked approaching animals with an electric device while moving through the pen) reacted strongly to avoid the experimenter. The findings of the study also suggest that the aversively treated pigs were chronically stressed (Gonyou et al., 1986, p. 276). Furthermore, pigs can change their behaviour towards human beings in relation to the experiences they have throughout their lives. Pigs showing less fear of humans because of positive handling in early life might change their attitude towards humans when experiencing different situations and the once positive effect of early gentling can be weakened or even overridden (Hemsworth & Barnett, 1992, pp. 89, 90). As pigs are capable of subjectively experiencing pleasure and pain, human-animal interaction which usually is quite frequent and intense in pig production (Hemsworth, 2008, p. 272) therefore influences them in positive and negative ways. This does not only have an effect on his/her welfare (e.g. fear, stress), but – as often emphasised – also on his/her productivity (e.g. growth, reproduction in sows and boars; Hemsworth et al., 1986, p. 311; Hemsworth & Barnett, 1992, p. 89; Hemsworth, 2008, pp. 275, 281; Hemsworth, 2014, p. 262). What is important to point out is that human-animal interactions are reciprocal in the way that they have effects on both partic-

ipants (Hemsworth, 2008, p. 272). If certain stimuli elicit fear in the animals (e.g. moving to unfamiliar environments), they will display behaviour that will make them harder to handle (e.g. pigs starting to pack together which makes it harder to sort them). This in turn provokes the use of aversive handling methods by the farmer (e.g. shouting, hits), aggravating fear and handling problems and lowering the farmer's job satisfaction – all of it exacerbating this vicious circle (Hemsworth, 2014, pp. 261–263). It is therefore important in human-pig interaction to understand the animals' sensitivity to human contact (Hemsworth, 2008, p. 275).

Moving and transport stress also needs to be mentioned when it comes to the pig's ability to psychologically experience pain and suffering. Besides the bodily violations that are likely to occur in the phase of moving and transporting animals (e.g. water deficiency, injuries; Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 181), pigs usually are easily stressed by such events (Matzke, 1989, p. 324). Not only does leaving familiar places commonly lead to anxiety and stress in animals (Danner & Stoll, 1993, p. 45), social disruption, the unpleasant motion experience, and noise can also irritate the animals (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 181). Additionally, loading and unloading put great strain on the animals, often resulting in difficulties to move them at all (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, pp. 187, 189). In scientific literature concerning the transportation to and movement in slaughterhouses, the focus is, however, again mainly put on economy, with mentioning injuries from bruising or hitting the animals as a threat to carcass quality (Matzke, 1989, p. 325; Battaglia, 2007[1998], p. 277). Recommendations for letting pigs rest at the lairage after transportation and before slaughter are not only made in favour of the animals' welfare but also in view of not impairing meat quality (Gregory & Grandin, 2007, p. 187).

As underlined by the examples of modern pig farming, the animals are routinely impaired in a sense that their potential to physically and psychologically experience pleasure and pain is neglected and hence a *denial of sentience* takes place.

3.1.7 Take-home message of the theoretical definition

Even though Nussbaum (1995) wrote her concept of objectification with the intention of identifying signposts of the thing-like treatment of women, the analysis within the previous chapters (see chapters 3.1.2 to 3.1.6) shows that her ontological considerations are very helpful when looking for a theoretical basis to study objectification in the animal context, specifically concerning the issue of meat.

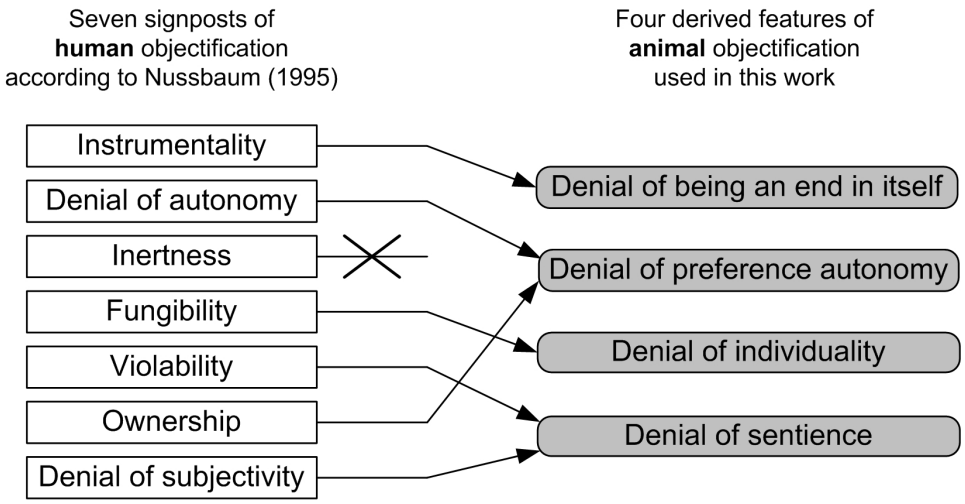

Figure 3.1: Derivation of the four features of animal objectification from Nussbaum's (1995) seven signposts of human objectification

Figure 3.1 gives an overview of the development of the four features of animal objectification out of Nussbaum's (1995) seven signposts of human objectification. *Instrumentality* as the first notion in Nussbaum's (1995) concept could be transferred to the animal context without any further modifications and was reformulated as a *denial of being an end in itself*. Her second notion of *denial of autonomy* was also regarded to be relevant when applied to animals; the definition of autonomy, however, had to be expatiated in terms of preference autonomy, and hence the notion had to be renamed into *denial of preference autonomy*. Further, Nussbaum's (1995) sixth notion of *ownership* was integrated into this characteristic. Since it was not possible to clarify her understanding of *inertness*, it does not seem to be useful as an indicator of objectification in general and hence had to be eliminated in the animal context. After having identified two forms of *fungibility*, this notion was also seen as being useful in the identification of animal objectification and was therefore included in the concept as *denial of individuality*. The controversially formulated fifth signpost of *violability* proposed by Nussbaum (1995) had to be reformulated and combined with the seventh signpost of *denial of subjectivity* as both of them seem to fall into what was named *denial of sentience*. Therefore, all notions of objectification that seem to be plausible signposts of human objectification can – with a few modifications (i.e. combinations, reformulations, adaptations) – also be seen as characteristics of animal objectification.

From here on out, the following four features developed out of Nussbaum's (1995) objectification concept are therefore defined as indicators of the objectification of animals

used for meat production within this work: *denial of being an end in itself*, *denial of preference autonomy*, *denial of individuality*, *denial of sentience*. Since the essence of objectification is denial, as outlined in chapter 2, all of these features have been formulated as denial. Furthermore, this kind of formulation shall emphasise that objectifying acts are certain forms of treatments, understood in the sense of Nussbaum's (1995) definition, which was given earlier (see chapter 3.1.1). By doing so, the fact that an animal is treated as an object is more obvious than it is with Nussbaum's (1995) naming of the seven signposts, which focus more on the outcome of objectification (e.g. *denial of being an end in itself* vs. *instrumentality*).

Objectification of animals within this work is therefore to be understood as

> *The treatment of animals – in form of speaking, acting, thinking, and/or seeing them – as objects, by denying them either one or more of the following four characteristics: being an end in themselves, having preference autonomy, having individuality, and being sentient.*

What became apparent within this chapter is that there exists a clear connection between the different forms of denial meat eaters employ and the treatment of animals as objects in practice regularly carried out by meat producers. Taking a look back to what was earlier described concerning the meat paradox, it becomes obvious that every single one of the four features of animal objectification that have now been developed out of Nussbaum's (1995) concept match with the theories and findings of the psychologists cited in chapter 2. That a *denial of being an end in itself* usually happens within the context of the issue of meat can be seen by the fact that consumers clearly define certain animals as being edible and therefore see them as mere instruments for fulfilling their nutritional needs and gustatory pleasures, as has been shown by the studies of Bastian et al. (2012; see chapter 2.3.1). The equivalent to the *denial of preference autonomy* that takes place in animal husbandry can be found in the studies conducted by Bastian et al. (2012) and Loughnan et al. (2010) which prove that meat eaters deny mind to animals by negating them to have desires, goals, or intentions (see chapters 2.3.1 and 2.3.2). The fact that *denial of individuality* comprises one aspect of Joy's (2011[2010]) cognitive trio, that helps consumers deal with the meat paradox (see chapter 2.4.2) shows one connection more between the denial carried out by consumers and producers. Last but not least, the findings of the studies conducted by Bastian et al. (2012) and Loughnan et al. (2010) that meat eaters deny experience-related capacities (e.g. pleasure, pain) to animals (see chapters 2.3.1 and 2.3.2) manifest in modern husbandry practice in what is subsumed

under *denial of sentience*. This refers back to the demonstration of meat eaters and meat producers as being equally involved into the meat paradox and the issue of meat (see chapter 3.1.1).

A methodological aspect of this work which could be criticised is the fact that I have approached the topic of animal objectification starting from a human concept. By analysing Nussbaum's (1995) theory of the objectification of humans and trying to adapt it to animals, I deliberately used an anthropological stance on the subject matter. In my opinion, however, Nussbaum's (1995) concept represents a rare and well thought out theoretical outline of objectification which is a good reason to take it as a solid background. Developing a totally new theory about objectification that starts right away from the animal realm without having any kind of theoretical construct for orientation seemed too uncertain to me. Furthermore, and most importantly, the objectifier is a human being, in human objectification as well as in animal objectification. Even though Nussbaum's (1995) theory concerns a different entity of objectification, i.e. humans instead of animals, it does not differ in the objectifying entity, i.e. humans. Therefore, her approach coming from the human realm is even more relevant as it helps to clarify the role of the human being as the objectifier.

Within the philosophical part of this work it was possible so far, with the help of Nussbaum's (1995) theory, to define a set of features that suggest objectification of animals. This does not, however, refer to the ethical assessment of thing-like treatment of animals. Therefore, based on these findings, an ethical examination of objectification will be undertaken in the next chapter (see chapter 3.2), employing Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory.[40]

3.2 Ethically evaluating animal objectification

Almost 35 years ago, the American philosopher Regan (2004[1983]) first published his book "The case for animal rights", which is considered a standard work in contemporary animal ethics. Within this book Regan (2004[1983]) sets forth his elaborate animal rights theory that will now be applied to investigate whether the objectification's components of denial are ethically problematic concerning the issue of meat. In relying on several fundamental ideas of Kant (1968[1785]) (Regan, 2007, p. 74), Regan (2004[1983]) follows

[40]Interestingly, feminist ethical theory is known for its early discussion of animal issues as well (Grimm et al., 2016, p. 89) and there exist certain parallels between animal rights approaches and feminist views (see Adams, 2010[1990]).

a deontological approach. Building on the theoretical outlines of objectification made earlier (see chapter 3.1) normative conclusions about the objectifying treatment of animals used for meat production will be found.

To this end, firstly Regan's (2004[1983]) theory will be sketched, though as detailed as necessary (see chapter 3.2.1). In a second step all features of objectification in the animal context will be ethically evaluated with the help of animal rights theory (see chapter 3.2.2). The normative findings developed within this chapter will then be summarised (see chapter 3.2.3).

3.2.1 Tom Regan's animal rights theory

Regan (2004[1983], p. lii) builds his theory on two propositions: firstly, he claims that animals have particular basic moral rights and secondly, he reasons that the recognition of these rights oblige humans to fundamentally change their treatment of these animals. This will be explained in more detail in the following paragraphs.

First of all, Regan (2004[1983], p. 232) views the formal principle of justice as the very basis of morality. Its meaning that all individuals should be given their due professes that it is a failure to treat similar individuals dissimilarly (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 232). The fact, however, that this principle is a formal one not only begs the question which individuals are relevantly similar in ethical terms, but also what these individuals are due (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 232). Since in (animal) ethics minds are divided about the answers to these questions, Regan (2004[1983], pp. 232–233) has set up his own theory of animal rights.

His approach focuses on the equality of individuals by introducing the concept of the 'inherent value', a distinctive kind of value that certain individuals[41] have in themselves (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 235). All these individuals possess this value equally, which cannot be earned or lost (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 237) and does not come in degrees (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 241). As a categorical concept, the inherent value is something that an individual has or does not have (Regan, 2004[1983], pp. 240–241). It is independent of the utility the individual has for others and it cannot be influenced by the interests others have in this individual (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 237). The inherent value is different from the utilitarian concept of the intrinsic value, which sums up the value of experiences an

[41] Which individuals are seen as having inherent value and why this is the case will be outlined in more detail in the course of this chapter.

individual made and hence does not appreciate the individual itself as valuable, but treats the individual as if it was a mere receptacle of valuable experiences (Regan, 2004[1983], pp. 235–236). As the intrinsic value only focuses on the value of 'what is in the receptacles' and allows these experiences to be totalled up, it allows for acts done in order to bring about the best aggregate consequences for all involved, even if this means to harm some individuals (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 238). According to Regan (2004[1983], p. 249):

> "This cannot be respectful of inherent value because it is to view the individual who is harmed *merely* as a receptacle of what has value (e.g., pleasure), so that the losses of such value credited to the harmed individual can be made up for, or more than compensated, by the sum of the gains in such values by other, *without any wrong having been done to the loser*".

Regan (2004[1983], p. 249) clearly dissociates from this view as:

> "in opposition to utilitarian interpretations [...] the interpretation of justice in terms of respect for individuals having inherent value *rules out, in advance, the permissibility of arriving at any distribution in certain ways*".

and defines the inherent value as being non-exchangeable for the intrinsic value of individuals, i.e. the inherent value is the same for individuals leading a happy life as for those leading a less fulfilling life.

Comparing Regan's (2004[1983]) concept of inherent value with the one of 'dignity', one of the most famous philosophers, Kant (1968[1785]), has campaigned, it becomes clear that despite also following a deontological approach (Alexander & Moore, 2016, s.p.), it differs in an important point: whereas Kant (1968[1785], pp. 434–435) strictly ties the ascription of dignity to moral agents (i.e. rational human beings), Regan (2004[1983], p. 239) pursues the view that not only moral agents but also moral patients (and with that also animals) can possess inherent value. Since "morality will not tolerate the use of double standards when cases are relevantly similar" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 240), Regan (2004[1983]) – starting from this inherent value – looks for a criterion that defines those characteristics of individuals who possess inherent value (regardless whether they are moral agents or moral patients) that makes them relevantly similar in ethical terms. Regan (2004[1983], p. 241) states that:

> "If moral agents and moral patients, despite their differences, are viewed as having equal inherent value, then it is not unreasonable to demand that we cite some relevant similarity between them that makes attributing inherent value to them intelligible and nonarbitrary".

Therefore, it has to be made clear which criterion recognises individuals as being relevantly similar.

To this end, he gives an elaborate description of the capacities of animals. Regan (2004[1983], p. 28) presents the cumulative argument for animal consciousness, which rests on the facts that attributing animals with consciousness is in line with the common sense view, the use of ordinary language, animal behaviour, evolutionary theory, and is independent from religious convictions. He, however, does not view this argument as "a strict proof of animal awareness", but sees in it the provision of "a set of relevant reasons for attributing consciousness to certain animals" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 28). He concludes that given the cumulative argument, members of many species, especially including all species of mammals, have a conscious awareness, even if, to a certain extent, it remains unclear which animals are conscious and how highly their consciousness is developed (Regan, 2004[1983], pp. 28–29). Regan (2004[1983], p. 30) knows about the difficulties of attribution of conscious awareness:

> "*Where one draws the line* regarding the presence of consciousness is no easy matter, but our honest uncertainty about this should not paralyze our judgement in all cases. We cannot say exactly how old or tall someone must be, to be old or tall, respectively, but it does not follow that we cannot recognize that some people are old or tall. Our ignorance about the shadowy boarders of attributions of consciousness is no reason to withhold its attribution to humans *and* those animal most like us in the relevant respects".

According to Regan (2004[1983], p. 34), the cumulative argument also stipulates that mammalian animals do have beliefs and desires. General beliefs enable these animals to initiate action in order to satisfy a desire, which is more than merely reacting to external stimuli as, for example, plants do (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 80). If animals are able to make such connections between choice and satisfaction, they are also able to perceive, remember, and (on the basis of past experiences) form general concepts (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 81). Furthermore, since beliefs often include expectations about the future, Regan (2004[1983], p. 81) infers that these animals must have a sense of (their own) future and hence are viewed to be (self-)conscious. Building on the cumulative argument, Regan (2004[1983], p. 81) also ascribes these animals emotions and sentience as the capacity to experience pleasure and pain.

These individuals – humans as well as animals – furthermore have a welfare, meaning that they can fare well or ill depending on the circumstances they find themselves in

(Regan, 2004[1983], pp. 82, 84). Since this welfare is tied to their physical and psychological identity which is retained over time, it is possible to talk about these individuals "as having a good or ill of their own" (Regan, 2004[1983], pp. 83, 96). They can hence be benefited or harmed, whereby benefits are to be understood as something that increases the opportunities for satisfaction and living a good life (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 88), and harm as something that seriously diminishes welfare (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 94). Harm can either appear in the form of inflictions (i.e. "acute or chronic physical or psychological suffering" as prolonged and intense pain; Regan, 2004[1983], p. 94) or deprivations (i.e. "losses of those benefits that make possible or enlarge the sources of satisfaction in life" which do not necessarily involve suffering or pain and of which the one concerned does not even have to be aware of; Regan, 2004[1983], p. 97). Against the background of the possibility to also understand harm as a deprivation, Regan's (2004[1983], p. 99) standpoint regarding the death and killing of animals is clear: "Death is the ultimate, the irreversible harm because death is the ultimate, irreversible loss, foreclosing every opportunity to find any satisfaction. This is true whether death is slow and agonizing or quick and painless" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 117). Having a welfare is related to the individuals' ability to act autonomously according to their preferences (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 83); i.e. to say these animals have preference autonomy (Regan, 2004[1983], pp. 84–85). As these individuals can without a doubt be said to have a welfare, they also have interests, because "a necessary condition of literally speaking of an individual as having an interest is that the individual have a well-being, a welfare" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 88).

Having roughly outlined these mental capacities, Regan (2004[1983], p. 78) reaches the conclusion that humans aged one or more (if not very profoundly mentally disabled or impoverished) and (mentally normal) mammals of a year or more are relevantly similar to combine them into the one group of individuals that have to be considered morally. Hence, Regan's (2004[1983], p. 243) ethical endeavours refer to these individuals who fulfil what he calls the 'subject-of-life criterion':

> "To be the subject-of-a-life, in the sense in which this expression will be used, involves more than merely being alive and more than merely being conscious [...] individuals are subjects-of-a-life if they have beliefs and desires; perception, memory, and a sense of the future, including their own future; an emotional life together with feelings of pleasure and pain; preference- and welfare-interests; the ability to initiate action in pursuit of their desires and goals; a psychophysical identity over time; and an individual welfare in the sense that their experiential life fares well or ill for them, logically indepen-

> dently of their utility for others and logically independently of their being the object of anyone else's interests. Those who satisfy the subject-of-a-life criterion themselves have a distinctive kind of value – inherent value".

The subject-of-a-life criterion is a relevant similarity between moral agents and patients because it is shared by all of them and is a categorical value that does not admit of degrees (Regan, 2004[1983], pp. 244–245). The fact that not all living beings are subjects-of-a-life entails that not all living beings have to be taken into account morally (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 245). At first sight, this might seem to be a very radical definition of the moral community that disturbs our moral intuitions, especially when it comes to (human) marginal cases. Regan (2004[1983]), however, pursues a very compelling and fair approach and is aware of postulates and assumptions that could turn out to be problematic (e.g. in the light of the fact that individuals can acquire as well as lose certain abilities in the course of their lives; Regan, 2004[1983], p. 77). He therefore very cautiously argues his theory and leaves certain parts open, which cannot sufficiently be declared right now. Nevertheless, in defining the subject-of-a-life criterion he goes through the trouble of looking for a criterion that can be the basis for the assignment of moral status. Regan (2004[1983], p. 246) therefore does not categorically want to rule out that some beings might have inherent value without fulfilling the subject-of-a-life criterion:

> "Since the claim is made only that meeting this criterion is a sufficient condition of making the attribution of inherent value intelligible and nonarbitrary, it remains possible that animals that are conscious but not capable of acting intentionally, or, say, permanently comatose human beings might nonetheless be viewed as having inherent value [...] however, it must be said that it is radically unclear how the attribution of inherent value to these individuals can be made intelligible and nonarbitrary".

In that, Regan (2004[1983]) honourably aims at the goal of including at least those individuals, which he can doubtlessly argue fall within the group of subjects-of-a-life and his approach can be understood as a fair approximation of this difficult topic. He hence does not shy away from taking a clear position, but at the same time remains vigilant and open to doubts and new findings that could interfere with his concept.

In his theory Regan (2004[1983]) makes clear that his focus is put on individuals who are subjects-of-a-life with their own inherent value – a definition including moral agents as well as moral patients, no matter whether human or animal. Having the status of a subject-of-a-life "is *logically* part of what it is for us or them *to be* in the world" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 244). Regan (2004[1983], pp. 243, 248) therefore answers the

question of which individuals should be considered morally, but rightly points out that this does not yet say how this consideration should look like. In order to determine what these individuals are due and what just treatment means in their cases, Regan (2004[1983], p. 248) formulates the so-called 'respect principle': "We are to treat those individuals who have inherent value in ways that respect their inherent value".[42] This respect principle rests on the postulate of inherent value (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 263). According to Regan (2004[1983], p. 277), it meets the relevant criteria a moral principle has to fulfil to be normatively valid because it is not only consistent and shows adequate scope and precision, but is also widely in line with our reflective intuitions (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 260). As moral agents and moral patients equally possess inherent value, they both are – as a matter of justice – owed respectful treatment (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 279). Treating individuals with the respect they are due is to refuse treating them "*as if they were mere receptacles* of valuable experiences [...] or *as if their value depended upon their utility* relative to the interests of others" (Regan, 2004[1983], pp. 248–249). Therefore, these individuals are treated disrespectfully whenever they are treated "*as if they lacked* inherent value" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 248). Regan (2004[1983], p. 249) 'fills' this fundamental principle with another principle, namely the 'harm principle'. The harm principle says that "we have [...] a prima facie direct duty not to harm those individuals who have an experiential welfare" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 262). Since all subjects-of-a-life have an experiential welfare and hence can be actively benefited or harmed (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 243), the respect principle is violated whenever an individual is harmed by a moral agent (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 249).[43] There are hence three main ways to fail treating an individual with the respect it is due:

(a) refusing to view it as having inherent value
(b) harming it by means of an infliction
(c) harming it in the sense of a deprivation.

After clarifying which individuals are due what treatment, Regan (2004[1983], p. 276) reinforces his theory by deriving the very basic right to just treatment for all individuals within his scope of moral consideration. Regan (2004[1983]) faces the issue of according

[42]Note that in his ethical theory, Regan (2004[1983]) also focuses on the aspect of treatment when it comes to setting up moral norms. This is interesting as Nussbaum (1995) in her description of objectification (which will later on be illuminated under the norms put up by Regan, 2004[1983]; see chapter 3.2.2) also emphasises that it is a form of treatment.

[43]Regan (2004[1983], p. 287), however, emphasises that while the harm principle in fact declares a 'prima facie' right not to be harmed, it cannot be seen as an absolute right never to be harmed by a moral agent. Harm can, for example, be justified in the case of self-defence by the innocent, punishment of the guilty, innocent shields, and innocent threats (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 287). These cases, however, will not be outlined furthermore because they are not deemed relevant for the topic of this thesis.

rights to all moral agents and moral patients equally. Since Regan (2004[1983], p. 274) views the duty of justice (i.e. not to treat relevantly similar individuals differently) as one of the most important unacquired duties (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 274), he deduces that there exists the right to just treatment and that this right is an unacquired one (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 276).

Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory therefore builds on the idea of the equal inherent value that all individuals fulfilling the subject-of-a-life criterion have in common. Regan (2004[1983]) hence does not only refuse to limit the moral scope only to humans, but takes a strong position in according rights equally to all individuals that have to be taken into account morally. Above all, he accords them the right to just treatment, which is reflected in treatment that respects their inherent value. Concerning the practical question of animal husbandry this leads Regan (2004[1983], p. 351) to take a clear position: "on that view [i.e. the rights view], we should not be satisfied with anything less than the total dissolution of commercial animal agriculture as we know it, whether modern factory farms or otherwise".

3.2.2 Animal objectification in the light of the animal rights theory

Having outlined the ideas and key elements of Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory (see chapter 3.2.1), the four features of animal objectification concerning the issue of meat that have been defined in chapter 3.1 following Nussbaum's (1995) theoretical analysis can be ethically evaluated.

Since pigs – used as the exemplary animals within this work – fall under what Regan (2004[1983], p. 243) defines as subjects-of-a-life, they are individuals that have to be considered morally and hence are due just treatment. All the ethical considerations in this chapter therefore apply to pigs used for meat production and can be directly connected to the practical examples given above (see chapters 3.1.2 to 3.1.6). Furthermore, as already stated in the introduction (see chapter 1), the following considerations also apply to cattle as subjects-of-a-life, who are another important species regarding the meat production systems of Western industrialised countries. Even though poultry as the third (and only nonmammalian) group of animals most intensively used in theses regions of the world would not fall within the moral scope of the animal rights approach following a strict interpretation of Regan's (2004[1983]) subject-of-a-life criterion, these animals are not to be left behind within this ethical analysis. Regan (2004[1983], pp. xvi, 349, 366) himself

concedes difficulties in where exactly the line between individuals who do and individuals who do not satisfy the subject-of-a-life criterion is to be drawn and is cautious to refuse these other animals at least the capacities of being conscious and experiencing pain. Since Regan (2004[1983], p. 367) states that "when our ignorance is so great, and the possible moral price so large, it is not unreasonable to give these animals the benefit of the doubt, treating them *as if* they are subjects, due our respectful treatment, especially when doing so causes no harm to us"[44], it is only fair to consider poultry as entering the moral community alongside pigs and cattle concerning the issue of meat.[45] Also Regan's (2004[1983], p. 78) restriction concerning the age of individuals passing the subject-of-a-life criterion can in these terms only be seen as an attempt to develop a convincing criterion with the option to widening the scope to individuals younger than a year. This is especially important in the case of pigs and poultry used for meat production, because these animals usually are slaughtered before they complete their first year of life.

In the following paragraphs, it will be examined whether treating animals according to the four features of objectification is morally reprehensible on the grounds of Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory and if so, why. To this end, every feature will be examined as to whether it falls under at least one of the three ways of ethically objectionable acting of humans towards animals used for meat production, as defined earlier (see chapter 3.2.1), namely: (a) refusing to view it as having inherent value, (b) harming it by means of an infliction, (c) harming it in the sense of a deprivation. It has to be kept in mind, however, that the ethical analysis of these features as done within this chapter is done from an animal rights viewpoint.

Denial of being an end in itself

The fact that animals used for meat production are treated as instruments for the humans' wish for meat has already become clear at the examples of pig husbandry given earlier (see chapter 3.1.2). By treating the animal as an instrument, he/she is denied being an end in itself.

In this vein, the animal is only accorded instrumental value, a certain form of value that depends upon and is "reducible to their utility to the interests of others" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 265). He/she hence only possesses this value because of his/her utility

[44]Particular uncertainties and hence possible extensions of the animal rights theory mentioned by Regan (2004[1983]) himself have already been brought up in chapter 3.2.1.

[45]In his book "Empty cages. Facing the challenge of animal rights", Regan (2004, pp. 59–61) once again addresses the problem of line drawing and proposes the recognition of birds and fish as subjects-of-a-life.

for others; as soon as this animal ceases to be useful for others, he/she loses his/her value. As being an instrument reduces the animal to his/her function, he/she is treated as being easily replaceable by any other individual fulfilling the same purpose, which was earlier described as one component of *fungibility* (see chapter 3.1.5). This furthers their treatment as renewable resources without inherent value. The following quote by Regan (2004[1983], p. 344) clearly demonstrates the moral reprehensibility of this view:

> "individuals who have inherent value are not renewable resources and are not to be treated as if they were. They have a kind of value that is distinct from, and is not reducible to, their utility relative to the interests of others, and they are always to be treated in ways that show respect for their independent value, not out of kindness or compassion but as a matter of strict justice. Any practice, institution, or other undertaking that permits or requires treating individuals with inherent value as if they were renewable resources, therefore, permits or requires treatment of these individuals that violates the respect principle [...] This verdict of the rights view is reached independently of considerations of the pain or suffering caused to those individuals who are treated as renewable resources, though what pain or suffering they are caused compounds the wrong. *It is the impoverished view of the value of these individuals, not only the pain or suffering they are made to endure, that exposes the practice as fundamentally unjust.* Even were the individuals who were treated as renewable resources, in the sense explained, 'treated well' (e.g., not caused unnecessary suffering), that would not alter the basic injustice of the practice; it would only eliminate the further wrong of harming these individuals in this way".

According to the animal rights approach therefore, a *denial of being an end in itself* represents a clear violation of the respect principle as this treatment *refuses to view the individual as having inherent value*, i.e. it disrespects the inherent value in the sense of way (a). This feature of objectification is therefore ethically objectionable.

Denial of preference autonomy

As outlined before (see chapter 3.1.3), animals used for meat production who are able to act autonomously in order to satisfy their preferences are usually to live out this potential. The fact that they are owned also contributes to this and deprives them of their freedom

to fully act independently. They are hence denied their preference autonomy.

Recalling Regan's (2004[1983], pp. 94, 249) definition of harm as possibly occurring as either an infliction or a deprivation and recalling his position that harm done to a subject-of-a-life by a moral agent represents a violation of the respect principle makes clear that the *denial of preference autonomy* harms an individual in the sense that it is a deprivation. Restricting the animal in his/her possibilities to autonomously follow his/her preferences in terms of food preferences, mating preferences, etc. withdraws potential benefits that bring about or increase satisfaction in the course of the animal's life and is hence to be seen as a deprivation (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 97).

Deprivations do not necessarily involve pain or suffering (and are therefore not necessarily experienced 'sentiently'; Regan, 2004[1983], p. 99) and can also affect an individual's life without him/her knowing about it; they then still represent a form of harm (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 97). In Regan's (2004[1983], pp. 97–98) words:

> "If I were to raise my son in a comfortable cage, in isolation from other human contact, though seeing to it that his basic biological needs were satisfied, and if, in all of my dealings with him, I went to considerable trouble to insure that he experienced no unnecessary pain, then I could not be faulted on the grounds that I was hurting him. However, I would have quite obviously harmed him and this in a most grievous way [...] That he doesn't know what he's missing is part of the harm I have done to him".

This example can easily be transferred to animals living under human custody and marks the wrongdoing towards them. Other examples for such a deprivation would be a "'happy' domestic slave" or a "'contented' housewife" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 97).

It is, however, easily possible that deprivations are accompanied by pain or suffering and hence can be viewed as a double-barrelled harm according to Regan (2004[1983], p. 99):

> "there is, first, the harm done to the individual because that individual is denied opportunities to obtain satisfaction from various sources; but there is also the harm done because of the suffering caused by the methods used to deprive the individual of these opportunities".

In intensive pig husbandry in which the animals are kept in close confinement on slatted floors, for example, this means that the animals do not only experience the harm in form of a deprivation in that they are severely restricted in their possibilities to move around

but also in form of inflictions becoming evident in the severe pain of injuries caused by the housing system. Chronic psychological suffering in the form of frustration because of being denied "the opportunity to do what they prefer" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 116) is also commonplace in animal husbandry and can be seen as an infliction accompanying the deprivation. These cases then are closely connected to the *denial of sentience*, as described in chapter 3.1.6.

Based on the realisation that a *denial of preference autonomy* taking place in animal husbandry restricts the animal in autonomously deciding and taking action according to his/her preferences, it is evident that the routine killing of animals used for meat production – irrespective of being accompanied by pain or suffering – is to be condemned.

Since, as Regan (2004[1983], p. 97) states:

> "individuals are prima facie harmed when benefits they have are taken from them or when circumstances, including the acts of others, preclude their having some benefit that is necessary if they are to have a realistic opportunity to live well relative to their abilities"

and harm clearly violates the respect principle, the *denial of preference autonomy* falls under a *harm in the sense of a deprivation*, i.e. it disrespects the inherent value in the sense of way (c). It hence has to be seen as an ethically objectionable treatment.

Denial of individuality

Deriving from Nussbaum's (1995) notion of *fungibility* this feature covers the aspect of what Joy (2011[2010]) calls 'deindividualisation' (see chapter 2.4.2). Understood in this sense, it could be shown that animals used for meat production commonly get lost in the mass with their individuality neglected (see chapter 3.1.5).

As Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory builds on the inherent value of the individual, refusing to recognise the single individual as such and in that denying its indispensable inherent value is to violate the respect principle. Following Regan's (2004[1983], p. 236) cup analogy, it becomes clear that it is the individual itself that is valuable:

> "The cup (that is, the individual) has value *and* a kind that is not reducible to, and is incommensurate with, what goes into the cup (e.g., pleasure). The cup (the individual) does 'contain' (experience) things that are valuable (e.g., pleasures), but the value of the cup (individual) is not the same as any one or any

> sum of the valuable things the cup contains [...] It's the cup, not just what goes into it, that is valuable".

In taking such a distinct position, Regan (2004[1983]) explicitly dissociates from utilitarian theories, which deem valuable the experiences of an individual rather than the individual itself. This gives way to considerations that neglect the individual and weigh their experiences in order to bring about the best aggregate consequences for all involved (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 238). Thereby, in aiming to produce the greatest good for the greatest number as a consequence of moral considerations, utilitarian views focus on a group of individuals but do not appreciate the single individual. It is not true that utilitarian positions morally take into account the individuality of a being by acknowledging its own experiences. Since they use these experiences (and thereby the individuals themselves) as an instrument for moral distributions to arrive at the greatest good for the greatest number in the end, they view the beings concerned as mere receptacles but not as having individuality. For Regan (2004[1983]), however, it is the individual with its inherent value that counts, and in that, he recognises the being with its own individuality and its own good.

A *denial of individuality* of the animals involved in the meat industry *refuses to view the individual as having inherent value*, i.e. it disrespects the inherent value in the sense of way (a) and hence violates the respect principle.[46] This denial can therefore be classified as an ethically condemnable treatment.

Denial of sentience

It has been extensively shown that animals used for meat production are regularly denied their capacity to physically and psychologically experience pleasure and pain, i.e. their sentience, in chapter 3.1.6.

Imposing harm on an individual that possesses inherent value and therefore has an experiential welfare is one of the main violations of the respect principle, according to Regan (2004[1983], p. 262):

> "those who have inherent value are owed treatment respectful of this value, those who have a welfare are owed treatment respectful of their distinctive

[46] The fact that this feature violates the respect principle in the same way as the first feature *denial of being an end in itself* does points out the close connection between these two. This is also underlined by the fact that Nussbaum's (1995) notion of *fungibility* (from which the *denial of individuality* has been derived) has been split up into two aspects in the first place, whereas the first was identified as falling under a *denial of being an end in itself* (see chapter 3.1.5).

> kind of value. Prima facie, therefore, we fail to treat such individuals in ways that respect their value if we treat them in ways that detract from their welfare – that is, in ways that harm them".

While Regan (2004[1983], p. 94) defines two forms of harm, namely inflictions and deprivations, for the purpose of this work it was decided that the *denial of sentience* only refers to the first one, i.e. a physical or psychological pain or suffering, experienced either acutely or chronically. This classification has been done because sentience describes the capacity of experience, which is a prerequisite to talk of inflictions. It is, however, not necessarily needed in the case of deprivations. Since deprivations harm the individual first and foremost by denying it certain opportunities which do not have to be accompanied by experienced pain or suffering and do not even have to be realised by the being concerned, it is more logical to group it into what was earlier described as a *denial of preference autonomy*. This does, however, not rule out the possibility that deprivations are accompanied by negative experiences for the individual, as described above.

Considering the examples of inflictions present in pig husbandry, given in chapter 3.1.6, one could ask whether these interventions would also neglect the animals' sentience when – merely hypothetically – all possible measures were taken to completely eliminate pain (during and after the procedures). Even though the animals would then be spared pain originating from the inflictions, they would still be harmed in the sense of a deprivation. If we take tail docking as an example and imagine a totally painless procedure and healing process, the pig would nonetheless be harmed as – after having been bereaved of a part of his/her tail – he/she is limited in his/her communication possibilities with his/her conspecifics (Nannoni et al., 2014, p. 103). Consequently, he/she is deprived of benefits from which he/she could probably gain satisfaction.

When looking at current husbandry practice, the animals, however, are normally not spared their pain and the common *denial of sentience* that takes place *harms the individual by means of an infliction*, i.e. it disrespects the inherent value in the sense of way (b). It has therefore to be seen as an ethically reprehensible treatment.

3.2.3 Take-home message of the ethical evaluation

The ethical evaluation of the features of animal objectification with Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory clearly showed that every single one of them has to be seen as ethically objectionable (see chapter 3.2.2). Figure 3.2 gives an overview of how each of the four denials involved in animal objectification violates the very basic principle of his

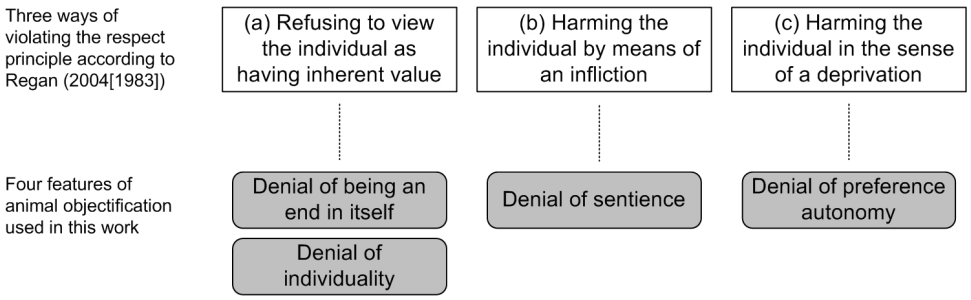

Figure 3.2: Assigning the four features of animal objectification to Regan's (2004[1983]) three ways of violating the respect principle

theory, namely the respect principle, in one of three possible ways defined earlier (see chapter 3.2.1). Even though these three ways differ in kind, they all result in disrespectful treatment of the inherent value, and so do the four denials.

Since every single one of the four features of animal objectification is ethically reprehensible, the question arises in which relation to each other these denials are and in how far this influences the judgement about the reprehensibility of objectification as a whole. In accordance with Nussbaum's (1995, p. 257) position, the features of objectification are seen as being "distinct from one another", meaning that either only one or more or even all of them can occur at the same time, but that they are not necessarily related to each other. Even though Nussbaum (1995, p. 258) does not commit herself to an answer whether each signpost is a sufficient condition to talk about objectification or whether more or even all are needed, in this work the standpoint is taken that the presence of only one feature (i.e. one denial) suffices. As soon as someone for a single time acts in the way of one denial, objectification takes place. It is not intelligible why only a certain number of denying acts or even only a set of acts of different denials should count to regard it as objectification. Either one acts in a certain way or one does not. This shall be illustrated by an example: taking a bite of a slice of bread is already considered eating. It is not necessary to take a certain number of bites before one can certainly talk of it as an act of eating.

Further, if more than one denial would be necessary to talk about objectification, this would be problematic, especially when several different persons are involved: if every single one would only act according to one denial, no one could be held responsible for the resulting objectification, because the single denials would not yet be seen as ethically reprehensible. People hence could escape their moral accountability and so responsibility would become diluted. Even though, a single consumer might 'only' use the pig as an instrument for his personal culinary interests and does not actively, 'hands-on' hinder

the animal to go outside and thereby deny him/her his/her preference autonomy, as the producer might do, he/she already can be held responsible for this single act of objectification. Therefore, recalling what was earlier said about the different roles of producers and consumers concerning the issue of meat (see chapter 3.1.1), this again shows that all of them are responsible for the objectifying treatment of animals. Additionally, objectification does not only include the manual acting towards the animal himself/herself, but also the acts of speaking, thinking, and seeing the animal as a thing.

Concluding from the ethical reprehensibility of each of the four denials, as identified earlier (see chapter 3.2.2), objectification has to be seen as ethically objectionable, no matter which characteristic/s is/are denied. As outlined in chapter 3.2.1 the subject-of-a-life criterion applies to humans as well as animals meeting certain requirements. Therefore, even though this work focuses on the treatment of animals used for meat production and emphasises the wrongdoing towards these animals in the case of objectification, objectification is always to be seen as ethically reprehensible as soon as it concerns a subject-of-a-life, no matter whether human, laboratory animal, pet, etc.

Another important point is that possibly occurring gradual differences in the actual performance of a denial do not bring about gradual differences in the ethical evaluation of it and thereby of objectification; that is to say that even though all of the four denials can take slightly different forms in practice, they still remain denials and hence, have to be judged as such. For example, pigs kept in close confinement certainly are refused their preference autonomy to a greater degree than pigs kept in free ranging systems. Nonetheless, both groups of animals are denied their preference autonomy in one way or the other and hence are objectified, which is to be rejected according to an animal rights position.

From an ethical point of view, within this work a subject is understood as an entity that has to be given moral consideration whereas an object has not, an approach that is also pursued by Leitsberger (2015, p. 2). Therefore, what is morally problematic about objectification is that – by means of one or more denial(s) – it denies a subject-of-a-life its status as a subject that has to be considered morally. As the term objectification makes clear, it turns a subject into an object, i.e. it turns an entity that has to be morally taken into account into one that does not have to be morally taken into account.[47] Therefore, via the four denials defined above (see chapter 3.1.7), objectification gives way to any

[47]It is important that the terms 'subject' and 'object' are not to be confused with what was earlier explained as 'moral agent' and 'moral patient' (see footnote 33). Whereas the distinction between moral agency and patiency in the first place refers to the question, who can be held morally accountable for his deeds, the differentiation of subjects and objects, as done within this thesis, deals with the question, who is due moral treatment.

arbitrary treatment of an entity that in fact would be due moral consideration. Objectifying a subject enables the objectifier to eliminate any moral qualms as an object does not have any moral claim and hence the dissonance connected to meat eating, as outlined in chapter 2, is solved. Furthermore, the consequences for the entity in question that follow from the loss of moral consideration are ethically condemnable as well (e.g. injuries caused by the housing conditions). The fundamental problem, however, remains to be the withdrawal of moral status of these entities based on the disrespect they encounter (Grimm, 2016, p. 56).

Objectification violates the respect principle, set up by Regan (2004[1983], p. 248), i.e. it does not treat individuals respectfully. With the subject-of-a-life criterion Regan (2004[1983], p. 78) gives a clear target of what these individuals, these subjects, in the first place are. Only when we know what the animal, i.e. the subject, is, it is possible to identify acts that transform him/her into something that he/she is certainly not, namely an object. As Leitsberger (2015, p. 27) rightly points out, "the acknowledgement of animals as entities to moral relevance is a vital prerequisite to talk about their objectification at all".

In chapter 3.2.2 the four denials which were developed out of Nussbaum's (1995, p. 257) theory and proposed to be characteristic of animal objectification have been evaluated against the background of exactly this definition of a subject-of-a-life. They exactly deny the animals those characteristics that are immanent in them as subjects-of-a-life. Within this work the understanding of a subject is identical with Regan's (2004[1983], pp. 78, 243) idea of the subject-of-a-life. In contrast to that an object is therefore an entity that does not fulfil the subject-of-a-life criterion.[48] The four characteristics that are denied in cases of objectification contentwise subsume the components important in defining a subject-of-a-life (see chapter 3.2.1) and hence it becomes obvious that objectification turns a subject into an object by denying it its relevant characteristics.

Whereas Nussbaum (1995, p. 271) does not think of objectification as necessarily being ethically alarming, but thinks of its ethical evaluation as being dependent on the context, objectification as understood within this work is always to be seen as ethically reprehensible. For Nussbaum (1995, pp. 251, 289–290) the ethical assessment of objectification depends on whether it is accompanied by consent and respect of all involved; as long as these two things are ensured, she does not condemn objectification but even

[48]When discussing subjects and objects, it should not go unnoticed that in this context concept of 'person' also plays a pivotal role in philosophy. The extensive debate about personhood, however, exceeds the scope of this work. For more information on this topic see for example White (2007), Benz-Schwarzburg (2012), and Rippe (2013).

suspects that it can be a positive experience. Building on Regan's (2004[1983]) theory, objectification, however, is always ethically problematic as the four denials involved in it violate the respect principle (see chapter 3.2.2). What is interesting here, is to note that also for Regan (2004[1983]) what matters in the ethical assessment is respect. In that, the theories of Nussbaum (1995) and Regan (2004[1983]) are not too far from each other. Nevertheless, following Regan's (2004[1983]) approach, I would not go thus far as to talk about positive forms of objectification. As outlined above, the denials in question always represent denials and as such are to be understood as ethically reprehensible according to an animal rights position. Therefore, objectification – building on these denials – is objectionable. What Nussbaum (1995, p. 265), however, means when she talks about using the stomach of one's lover as a pillow viewing this as a permissible form of instrumentalisation and subsequently objectification, does in my opinion call for the need of an alternative terminology. Sticking to Regan's (2004[1983]) theory does not mean to forget that such situations as referred to by the sp-called 'pillow example' exist, it rather separates more clearly what it means to treat or not to treat somebody with the respect he/she is due. According to how Regan's (2004[1983]) approach is interpreted within this work, using one's partner as a pillow does not fall under what is understood as instrumentalisation. On the contrary, this describes a variety of inter-individual relationship that takes account of the respect principle. Even though, this is contentwise similar to what Nussbaum (1995, p. 289) states, when she insists on the role of respect in cases of benign objectification, I refuse to use the term instrumentalisation and hence objectification for such cases as this implies a denial which does not take place.

As has been shown earlier (see chapters 3.1.2 to 3.1.6), the practice of modern pig production in Western industrialised countries has actually incorporated all four denials indicating objectification. There is no question that these animals are objectified through humans' actions towards them; on the basis of an animals rights approach, this has to be condemned ethically.[49] Even though Regan (2004[1983]) does not explicitly comment on animal objectification, using his theory to analyse this topic makes it possible to draw clear conclusions about its reprehensibility. Regan (2004[1983], pp. 348–349) takes an unequivocal stand concerning the use of animals, especially as meat – a point where we

[49]Despite the fact that this thesis focuses on the issue of meat in Western industrialised countries, especially on the case of pigs, it can be supposed that a lot of the stated aspects, however, can contentwise also be transferred to other species used for meat production (i.e. the described basic conditions of production as well as the moral implications derived from this work). Furthermore, it would be interesting to investigate the topic of objectification also with regard to animals used for other agricultural purposes than meat production, like dairy cows.

also arrive when approaching this topic from the objectification taking place in animal husbandry:

> "It is true – and the point bears emphasis – that *the ultimate objective of the rights view is the total dissolution of the animal industry as we know it*, an objective that should hardly be surprising, given the rights view's verdict that, as presently conducted, this industry violates the rights of farm animals".

3.3 Wrap-up of the philosophical analysis

Within this chapter, the psychological evidence of animal objectification concerning the issue of meat was connected with philosophical considerations and subjected to an ethical examination. To this end, Nussbaum's (1995) theoretical construct about what objectification (of human beings) means in detail and which indicators of it exist helped to define four distinct denials pointing to thing-like treatment of animals used for meat production. In this, it became clear that the characteristics are not fundamentally different from those specified within the human context; in dealing with animal objectification, however, this work is a rare representative of its kind. The four features of animal objectification identified are: *denial of being an end in itself*, *denial of preference autonomy*, *denial of individuality*, *denial of sentience* (see chapter 3.1). It was advantageous that Nussbaum's (1995) concept is theoretical enough to serve as a legitimate philosophical basis, but at the same time sufficiently close to reality to attach practical examples to it. Hence, by illuminating examples of current pig husbandry in Western industrialised countries it was unveiled that routine treatment of the animals as objects is an established and commonly accepted practice. Acts of objectification are commonplace and humans are *treating as an object, what is, in fact, an animal being.* The examples emphasised the practical relevance of the issue of meat, showed the involvement of society, and made the derivation of the normative implications more concrete.

The identification of objectification was an important step for the ethical evaluation, whether it has to be seen as a morally justifiable or reprehensible act. This was done by applying the animal rights theory campaigned by Regan (2004[1983]) from the 1980s on (see chapter 3.2). As a deontological theory, it is based on a distinctive kind of value, the inherent value. This value is possessed by all subjects-of-a-life, i.e. all mammals (naturally including human beings) aged one year or more having certain (mental) capacities, which have therefore to be treated with respect. A possible expansion of Regan's theory, using his own arguments, would suggest that a wide range of animals used for meat production

are included in these subjects-of-a-life. Three different ways of disrespectful treatment have been identified and it was shown that they underlie the four denials. Therefore, objectification clearly marks an ethically condemnable treatment of animals used for meat production. Since the norm underlying Regan's (2004[1983], p. 279) theory says that all subjects-of-a-life have to be treated in ways that respect their inherent value and since within this work it has been set out in detail (see chapter 3) that not only recent modes of meat production (in which animals are routinely treated as things) but also the general idea of raising and killing animals for food are incompatible with this standpoint, the implications of Regan's (2004[1983], pp. 24–25) rights view are clear:

> "As for commercial animal agriculture, the rights view takes a[n] [...] abolitionist position. The fundamental moral wrong here is not that animals are kept in stressful close confinement or in isolation, or that their pain and suffering, their needs and preferences are ignored or discounted. All these *are* wrong, of course, but they are not the fundamental wrong. They are symptoms and effects of the deeper, systematic wrong that allows these animals to be viewed and treated as lacking independent value [i.e. inherent value]".

It was possible to uncover the components of denial common in objectifying practices towards animals used for meat production by analysing Nussbaum's (1995) theoretical concept of human objectification. Furthermore, Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory helped to elaborate the moral problems relating to such a denial. Therefore, the second part of the hypothesis of this work could be verified.

After having examined both parts of the hypothesis of this work, the following chapter will summarise and discuss the findings of the present thesis as well as add some final thoughts (see chapter 4).

Chapter 4

Discussion

Within this work it could be shown that regarding the issue of meat the disciplines of psychology and philosophy are tightly connected. In the following chapter a short résumé (see chapter 4.1) shall once again intelligibly capture this fact with a few sentences based on the findings of the present work. Furthermore, since it was the main aim of this thesis to philosophically and ethically analyse the phenomenon of animal objectification, a critical philosophical reflection will be given (see chapter 4.2). Some final thoughts will then complete the extensive examination of objectification of animals used for meat production (see chapter 4.3).

4.1 Résumé

The fact that eating meat is socially accepted and can even be viewed as a social norm (at least) within Western industrialised countries, is without question. People in these parts of the world are socialised within a system that routinely uses animals for meat and mostly take this animal resource for granted. As several authors critically reflect, the internalisation of these customary norms lead people to accept violence and mistreatment towards animals (Adams, 2010[1990], p. 26; Longo & Malone, 2006, p. 111; Williams, 2008, p. 372; McKay, 2010, p. 43). However, even though people seem to overlook this truth of animal exploitation, there have also continuously been critical voices against such reckless forms of animal use (Grimm et al., 2016, p. 79). This traces back to moral intuitions people have against the irresponsible treatment of animals as there exists a moral common sense that lets people regard animals as being worthy of moral consideration (Grimm, 2012, p. 278). They experience an ethical responsibility at least for sentient beings (Grimm & Hartnack, 2013, p. 375) which makes current treatment of animals used for meat production ethically problematic.

As extendedly described in chapter 2, this ambivalence between attitudes and treatment results in a dissonance people experience. The strategy of objectification that has been proposed within this work to deal with the resulting unease seemingly solves the problem by reducing the animal subject that has to be considered morally to an object that does not have any valid moral claims. This, however, is only a superficial strategy as objectification only obscures the morally problematic forms of treatment being characteristic for the issue of meat. First of all, declaring a subject to an object by denying him/her certain characteristics is only something that happens cognitively, while the animal clearly remains the subject with these certain characteristics and resulting needs. Therefore, any form of treatment that seems to be morally unproblematic when the animal is regarded an object, remains ethically reprehensible. The actual problem is merely shifted from one level to another: while after having objectified the animal it might no longer be problematic to treat him/her as a thing, the act of objectification itself is what is ethically condemnable. Objectification thus serves as a concealment of moral qualms, but neither solves them by doing so nor is objectification itself morally unproblematic. The relation between objectivity and objectification has been pointed out by Langton (2000) and comprehensibly rephrased by Papadaki (2015, s.p.):

> "When someone is objective, his or her beliefs have the right direction of fit: the beliefs are arranged in order to fit the way the world is. *Objectification*, on the other hand, is about the ways in which the world conforms to mind (conforms to our beliefs). An objectifier's beliefs have the wrong direction of fit: the objectifier arranges the world in order to fit his or her beliefs, which are influenced by his or her desires, instead of arranging his or her beliefs to fit the way the world actually is. Objectification, then, is a process in which the social world comes to be shaped by desire and belief. An objectifier thinks that her or his beliefs have come to fit the world, where in fact the world has come to fit her or his beliefs".

Objectification is a successful strategy to deal with the dissonance of the meat paradox and hence this practice is also reinforced by our social system (Petrus, 2013, p. 56). That objectification of animals, however, is ethically reprehensible, has been shown in chapter 3.2. Therefore, the whole complex of the issue of meat is morally troublesome when it is accompanied by objectification of the animal.[50] Certainly, there are manifold arguments against the current use of animals for meat and their consumption, that do not directly relate to objectification. However, with regard to the focus of this thesis, the

[50]Whether eating meat is necessarily accompanied by objectification is left open to discussion.

conclusions only address the connections between objectification and the issue of meat. The animal rights theory offers moral norms that clearly refuse objectification of animals and the use of them as meat. Since ethics is able to provide orientation for individual acting (Grimm, 2012, p. 278), the moral norms concerning the issue of meat that have been uncovered within this work can help to question and remodel social norms.

4.2 Philosophical reflection

Animal ethics is a relatively young research field which was only institutionally established as a scientific discipline in the 1970s (Huth, 2013a, p. 111; Grimm et al., 2016, pp. 78–79). However, ethical questions about humans' relation to animals and about which individuals have to be included into our moral scope have been of great relevance for several hundreds of years (Gottwald, 2015, p. 132). They have already been dealt with by many famous philosophers, such as Jeremy Bentham about 200 years ago, and meanwhile have become a fixed part of the academic discussion (Grimm et al., 2016, pp. 78, 79). For this work, the theory of one of the key figures in this area, namely Regan (2004[1983]), has been employed. Therefore, the following chapter will deal with his positioning within the field of animal ethics, especially in contrast to utilitarian views, and will also present some commonly addressed criticism of his theory. Against the background of the differences between deontological and utilitarian positions, a practical example shall illustrate the ethical findings of this work. Moreover, an alternative approach to the topic of animal objectification will be given.

4.2.1 Regan's animal rights theory within animal ethics

The scientific examination of the vivid debates in animal ethics has been shaped especially by the two well-known animal ethicists: Peter Singer and Tom Regan (Grimm et al., 2016, pp. 85, 86). Both of them are convinced that membership in the moral community does not depend on belonging to a certain species, but that it depends on the possession of certain abilities and hence can also include animals. Therefore, they follow the argument from moral individualism, which is acknowledged as the dominant strategy for argumentation in animal ethics (Grimm, 2016, p. 46). The basic idea of moral individualism "is that how an individual may be treated is to be determined, not by considering his group memberships, but by considering his own particular characteristics" (Rachels, 1990, p. 173). Against this background, it is clear, that the mere membership in the human species cannot be the solely accepted criterion to be part of the moral community as this would represent a speciesist form of argumentation. In order to not forfeit speciesism but to focus on the

individual possession of certain morally relevant abilities then means to define a criterion that (irrespective of the species membership) grants individuals – humans as well as animals – the inclusion into the moral community. Since, however, there are no criteria which can be said to be uniquely human with certainty and possessed by all humans (Tischler, 2010, p. 85; Petrus, 2013, p. 52; Kurth et al., 2016, pp. 13–14), the concept of a moral community consisting only of humans has to be reorganised, which is possible in two ways: either the criteria individuals have to fulfil to be seen as part of the moral community are defined so narrowly that we would have to live with the fact that not all humans are to be morally considered (e.g. small children, mentally disabled, etc.) which is clearly against our moral intuitions, or the criteria have to be defined in a much wider sense in which we have to accept that certain animals will enter the stage of moral consideration (Regan, 1985, p. 23).

By deliberately thinking through their ethical arguments, Singer (2009[1975]) as well as (Regan, 2004[1983]) each make the effort to define a criterion they deem crucial for moral consideration. Whereas Singer (2009[1975]) focuses on the criterion of mere sentience, Regan (2004[1983]) formulates the more sophisticated subject-of-a-life criterion – both of these criteria, however, are not only fulfilled by humans, but also by certain animals and thereby the moral community is extended. In the tradition of the Aristotelian principle of equality, they share the view that, as soon as individuals are relevantly similar, they have to be equally taken into account (Weiss, 2012, p. 55; Grimm et al., 2016, p. 86). Therefore, they reject speciesism, which is defined as "a prejudice or attitude of bias in favor of the interests of members of one's own species and against those of members of other species" by Singer (2009[1975], p. 6). They strongly believe that animals cannot categorically be excluded from our moral community.

As much as Singer (2009[1975]) and Regan (2004[1983]) are convinced of the moral inclusion of animals that fulfil the respective criterion, they differ in the ethical approach they take equally as much. Singer and Regan are representatives of two of the main positions pursued by animal ethicists: utilitarianism and deontology (Grimm et al., 2016, pp. 85–88). In addition to what already shone through in chapter 3, these two approaches will now be characterised shortly to differentiate between them and to make clear the reasons for choosing Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory even more explicit.

Utilitarian positions pursue a consequentialist idea of ethics in which the outcome of an act is what is morally relevant (Czaniera, 2010, p. 2849; Driver, 2014, s.p.; Birnbacher, 2015, p. 399). Acts are evaluated according to the outcome they result in and ethical considerations are oriented towards bringing about the greatest good for the greatest

number of members of the moral community (Czaniera, 2010, p. 2849). "On the utilitarian view one ought to maximize the overall good – that is, consider the good of others as well as one's own good", whereby everyone's good counts the same and nobody's good counts for more than anyone else's good (Driver, 2014, s.p.). By equally taking into account everyone's good, utilitarianism is strictly egalitarian (Regan, 2007, p. 83). It does not, however, focus on the individuals involved, but on their goods, e.g. interests, and allows for aggregating them over a larger group of individuals irrespective of the single individuals themselves. Such weighing of interests has to ensure the optimum consequence for the majority of all involved (Driver, 2014, s.p.).

Following this idea, Singer (2009[1975]) establishes a theory that takes into account the interests of all such individuals that fulfil the criterion of being sentient. He hence refuses to restrict the moral community only to humans and opens it to all sentient animals. Singer (2009[1975]) views the equal consideration of interests (no matter whether human or animal) as crucial when it comes to moral weighing scenarios (Czaniera, 2010, p. 2850; Birnbacher, 2015, p. 400). His theory aims at maximising the fulfilment of interests of all individuals involved (Grimm et al., 2016, p. 85), although this can happen at the expense of innocent individuals (Tischler, 2010, p. 148). Against the background of today's agriculture, moral weighing of the animals' interests (in leading a life without suffering) against the humans' interests (in fulfilling their gustatory pleasures), as Singer (2009[1975]) pursues it, clearly results in the condemnation of the current use of animals as meat. Utilitarianism, however, does not demand to end all kinds of animal use provided that they are not accompanied by unnecessary suffering. It does also not categorically rule out the killing of animals (or even humans) as long as it is done painlessly (Wolf, 2005, p. 47; Birnbacher, 2015, p. 400).

In contrast to utilitarianism, deontology does not evaluate acts according to their outcome, but to compliance with defined moral principles and rights (Grimm et al., 2016, p. 86). Choices have to be made in accordance with such moral norms and "the Right is said to have priority over the Good. If an act is not in accord with the Right, it may not be undertaken, no matter the Good that it might produce" (Alexander & Moore, 2016, s.p.). By strictly refusing the aggregation of interests over a group of several individuals and prohibiting such scenarios of moral weighing, it always sees the single individual as the one that has to be taken into account (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 249).

In the deontological tradition, Regan (2004[1983]) develops his theory of animal rights that assigns inherent value to all individuals who fulfil the subject-of-a-life criterion. Individuals who are assigned inherent value have the right to be treated with respect ac-

cording to this value; the individual as such is therefore strongly protected. In that, Regan's (2004[1983]) theory goes beyond a pathocentric position that focuses merely on sentience. By viewing it as morally reprehensible if the inherent value of an individual is neglected, irrespective of whether harmful treatment is present or not, and furthermore including forms of harm of which the being concerned does not necessarily have to be aware of (i.e. deprivations) to be counted as ethically objectionable, his approach explicitly exceeds a mere pathocentric view. This is also demonstrated by Regan's (2004[1983]) demand to abolish all kinds of animal use and his explicitly stated point against the painless killing of animals. His subject-of-a-life criterion is formulated quite broadly in order to include a lot of species (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 211). What Regan (2004[1983]) does in sticking to a deontological view is to widen the scope of moral worthiness of protection to certain animals. The introduction of inherent value leads him to accord those individuals who are members of the moral community certain basic rights; a very important point in which his theory differs from Singer's (2009[1975]).

Regan's (2004[1983]) approach meets our moral intuitions of individual protection as we know it from the human sphere: interhuman morality is grounded in the idea of human dignity, an idea comparable to Regan's (2004[1983]) concept of inherent value, which is accompanied by certain basic rights. His way of deontological argumentation expatiates the basic belief that moral weighing of interests at the expense of the single individual is ethically objectionable and reinforces our moral comprehension that it is first and foremost the individual that has to be taken into account (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 209). Regan (2004[1983]) makes use of the advantage of deontological theories which are "able to account for strong, widely shared moral intuitions about our duties better than can consequentialism" (Alexander & Moore, 2016, s.p.). It is exactly this understanding of morality as we know it from the human realm that makes the animal rights approach so understandable when ethically analysing objectification of animals used for meat production.

When looking at objectification and its meaning of turning a subject into an object, it becomes clear that the subject as such plays an important role – a notion that is paramount in Regan's (2004[1983]) deontological theory but is of minor importance in utilitarian positions. In other words: heavily promoting the individual as a subject that has to be respected of its own account is the case in Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory, but not in Singer's (2009[1975]) utilitarian view in which the focus of moral consideration lies in the optimum outcome regarding the interests of the individuals involved. Utilitarian positions give way to the aggregation of interests which not uncommonly lead to

negative consequences for some individuals (Kaplan, 2010, p. 87). This, however, cannot happen when pursuing the deontological rights view which a priori scotches any weighing scenario that overrules the individual as such in order to bring about the best output for all involved, as rightly pointed out by Kaplan (2010, p. 90). To ethically evaluate and reasonably conceptualise objectification was one of the main aims of this thesis and requires a theory that focuses on the individual subject. Thus, a utilitarian perspective was deemed unsuitable.

4.2.2 Max, the meat eater – a fictional practical example

A practical example that may illustrate how objectification can solve the cognitive dissonance occurring as a result of the meat paradox is the following: Imagine a fictional human named Max socialised within any Western industrialised country, who is used to regularly eating meat and at the same time is fond of animals in general, especially of his dog and some of the cattle of the neighbouring farm he regularly visits when walking his dog. Because of his attachment to the just described animals, the growing awareness of animal welfare manifesting in discussions on television as well as among his friends, and a certain moral intuition that it might be wrong to eat animals, Max experiences a certain discomfort. Critically reflecting on his meat consumption, he thinks about the interests he has in eating meat and the interests the animal (that is going to end up as this meat) has in not being hurt. Applying a utilitarian weighing scenario following Singer's (2009[1975]) theory, Max soon recognises that the animal's interest in not being hurt is more substantial than his interest in eating meat. This is even more the case when he informs himself about current husbandry practice and reminds himself of his vegetarian friend who leads a totally healthy life even though he is abstaining from meat. Max now has mainly two options: either he changes a behavioural element and quits eating meat or he changes one of the cognitive elements that is the reason for his dilemma (e.g. that the animal has an interest in not suffering). For convenience only, our fictional human takes the second path: he starts to change the cognitive element that animals have an interest in not suffering by denying them certain characteristics (e.g. pleasure, memory, etc. as features constitutive of mind). Thereby, Max does nothing other than turning the animal into an object – he objectifies him/her. Reinforced by official campaigns promoting the consumption of meat and discussions with colleagues at work who are confident omnivores, Max's cognitive consonance is restored. It then happens that Max is asked by a teenager, who is interested in reasons for and against meat eating, why he consumes meat. Max, now fully confident in his role as a meat eater, explains why he thinks of

meat eating as being morally unproblematic: employing a utilitarian approach, he argues, means to weigh interests of the parties concerned and since the one party involved, namely the animals, can with certainty be said not to have interests at all, his interest in eating meat prevails. Max hence does not have a problem with the consumption of meat any more and above all thinks of himself as acting according to a proper ethical theory. What he does not realise, however, is that the moral problem lies in the objectification of the animal in the first place. Acting according to a proper utilitarian theory is not what is condemnable per se (even if this is not the favoured approach by all people) as it is at least justifiable by valuable arguments; what is objectionable is the objectification in the first place, which makes possible the utilitarian argument that Max presents to the teenager.

4.2.3 Common criticism of Regan's theory

Even though Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights view follows a stringent and plausible argumentation, which is very useful for the purpose of this work, it also has to face justified criticism, as is the case with every elaborate ethical position. The most important arguments against his position will be given in the following paragraphs.

One main point of discussion regarding Regan's (2004[1983]) theory is the definition of his subject-of-a-life criterion, or more precisely spoken, the consequence he draws from it, namely that only such humans "aged one or more, who are not very profoundly mentally disabled or otherwise quite markedly mentally impoverished (e.g., permanently comatose)" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 78) and those animals who are "mentally normal mammals of a year or more" (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 78) doubtlessly fulfil this criterion and hence are to be morally considered. With regard to humans, this results in the exclusion of individuals like people who are heavily mentally impaired or infants younger than one year which is clearly strongly contra-intuitive to our moral sensations (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 211). Furthermore, such a narrow scope of his definition is seen as problematic by Tischler (2010, p. 168) when looking at animals because this does not only preclude mammals with short life expectancies (e.g. rats) but also other animals, like reptiles, who are very likely to also possess those abilities subsumed under the subject-of-a-life criterion.

This criticism certainly cannot be neglected. However, it is a general problem that theories which set up criteria to make situations clearer and easier to evaluate have to face. As soon as a criterion for moral inclusion is established, only the individuals fulfilling it have to be morally considered (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 211). This is especially true when biological features are assigned moral relevance. Hence, this problem is not specific to Regan (2004[1983]), but can also be found in several theories other than rights

approaches (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, pp. 396–397). Especially when it comes to animal ethics and protection, we are only too often confronted with the need to draw clear boarders where there are none (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 396). This of course is a tough realisation, but it seems to be inevitable. However, only by setting up distinct criteria, such theories can guarantee that moral decisions and judgements are not made arbitrarily. It is important, though, that this does not mean that cases, like the severely disabled or small children, do not have to be taken into account in general – they can and should, of course, be protected by other arguments or indirect duties (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 211). Based on Benz-Schwarzburg's (2012, p. 274) suggestion of a synthesis of pathocentric positions and rights positions, one could imagine that while refusing some individuals strong rights because they do not fulfil the subject-of-a-life criterion, it does not automatically mean that these individuals fall out of our scope of moral consideration; they still can be protected for pathocentric reasons. Furthermore, Regan (2004[1983]) himself is aware of this difficulty of exactly determining which individuals meet the subject-of-a-life criterion and he is of the opinion that in cases of doubt, the individuals in question should be allowed the status of being a subject-of-a-life.

Regan's (2004[1983]) effort of developing an animal rights theory analogous to human rights and morality on the one hand has the advantage of offering a strong protection of the individuals who are subjects-of-a-life, on the other hand, however, it has to face the criticism that it only protects such individuals that are sufficiently similar to humans regarding their (cognitive) characteristics (Grimm, 2013, pp. 61, 62–63). Grimm (2013, pp. 61, 62) rightly points out that by doing so, also Regan (2004[1983]) only extends the moral community to animals, while still taking the human being as the measure of moral consideration.

Thurnherr (2013, pp. 148–149) expresses similar concerns when he states that the basic problem of animal ethics is that the inclusion of animals into our moral community in the end is dependent on the humans' capability and willingness to recognise the animals' characteristics and abilities. With that, Thurnherr (2013) provides us with two key words which are essential to approach this question: capability and willingness. Our capability of seeing the animal as the animal he/she is, certainly is limited. Being human and discussing the animal, we will always be stuck in the phenomenon of being human, viewing the world around us – and with it its animals – through our human eyes, only gaining a human perspective. Since we have to acknowledge that we are limited in this respect, we have to concentrate on the second aspect of willingness that is decisive in how we view the animals, too. Although we will never be able to put down our human glasses, which

restrict our sight of the world, we can either try hard or simply try less hard to view the animal as the being he/she is. To best possible meet the challenge to view the animal as the entity he/she is, Grimm (2013, pp. 53, 77, 84) defines the 'normative animal' that is to be used as a concept of ethical reflection about our actions towards animals. In that Grimm (2013, p. 87) establishes a concept of the 'animal per se' which warns us against determining the animal according to a human measure; however, this is a fairly difficult task, especially as it is not entirely clear what it means to meet the animals' demands (Grimm, 2012, p. 278). Grimm (2013, p. 86) himself, however, emphasises that in all our (ethical) dealings with animals we cannot get rid of the fact that it is always us humans facing the animal. Accepting that it might be a weakness of Regan's (2004[1983]) approach that he defines the subject-of-a-life criterion in quite close relation to human characteristics, we must acknowledge that his approach is rather comprehensive and that he shows great willingness to appreciate the animals' characteristics and abilities.

Concerning Regan's (2004[1983]) method of setting up the subject-of-a-life criterion, Huth (2013a, pp. 113–114) formulates an interesting criticism: he argues that by defining certain traits that are essential for being a subject-of-a-life (which then in turn establishes inherent value for the individuals concerned), Regan (2004[1983]) in the end also makes certain traits count. According to this thought, this has to be seen as similar to Singer's (2009[1975]) approach in which the intrinsic value, i.e. the value attached to an individual's characteristics and thereby also experiences, is decisive in moral questions. In Huth's (2013a, p. 113) opinion, this can therefore be seen as if kind of an intrinsic value precedes Regan's (2004[1983]) actual concept of inherent value.

Even though this thought shall not be totally disputed, it is important to recognise that two levels are involved here: on the one hand there is the level referring to the question 'Who is morally protected at all?' and on the other hand there is the level referring to the question 'What is it that has value when actual moral decisions have to be made?' When it comes to the first question, Regan (2004[1983]) as well as Singer (2009[1975]) define a criterion based on certain characteristics individuals have to fulfil to be morally protected, as outlined above: the subject-of-a-life criterion and sentience, respectively. When it comes to moral decisions, however, the paths of the two philosophers separate according to the different approaches they pursue. While Regan (2004[1983]) views the individual itself, i.e. the subject-of-a-life with its inherent value, as morally valuable, Singer (2009[1975]) views the interests and experiences of the individuals, as valuable and hence assigns them intrinsic value. So while both philosophers make use of certain features when answering the question of who is morally protected at all, only Singer (2009[1975])

ascribes value to interests and experiences when it comes to moral decisions and hence gives way to moral weighing scenarios. In contrast to that, on the level of actual moral decisions, Regan (2004[1983]) does not go by experiences but offers strong protection for the individual, refusing any weighing of interests. Even though Huth (2013a, p. 114) concedes that Regan (2004[1983]) – other than Singer (2009[1975]) – does not allow for moral weighing scenarios, the criticism of inherent value as also relying on intrinsic value is formulated too clumsy, in my opinion. While it is true, that characteristics do play a role in both approaches, what seems decisive to me is that the two philosophers arrive at very different concepts of value which is of great relevance in actual moral considerations.

To once again employ the cup analogy described in chapter 3.2, it becomes obvious that characteristics in deontological approaches are 'only needed' as a building material for the cup, i.e. the individual as a subject-of-a-life, whereas in utilitarian approaches characteristics are also of great importance when moral decisions have to be made, failing to protect the individual. This leads me to try to reword the classical cup analogy: if we imagine the cup as a closed container made out of pottery rather than a cup, which is naturally open, the difference between Regan's (2004[1983]) and Singer's (2009[1975]) position becomes even clearer. If we imagine that experiences, for example, can go into this container but cannot escape that easily, like in the case of those cute little piggy banks we know from childhood into which coins can be thrown in through the slot, but cannot be taken out the same way. Characteristics are needed to define which individuals are piggy banks, i.e. individuals worth moral consideration, in Regan's (2004[1983]) as well as Singer's (2009[1975]) view. For Regan (2004[1983]), however, it is totally irrelevant which or how many coins, i.e. experiences, are in the piggy bank, whereas for Singer (2009[1975]) it is not. Allowing for weighing interests, experiences, etc. and distributing them between individuals with the goal of producing the best aggregate outcome for all involved, Singer (2009[1975]) does not ascribe value to the individual, that is, the piggy bank in our thought experiment. Consequently, as Singer (2009[1975]) focuses on the contents of the containers rather than the containers themselves, decisions can readily be made at the cost of these containers, i.e. the individuals, just as piggy banks that have to be broken in order to reach the coins. Just because both philosophers make use of characteristics in some way in their concepts (which is very common in establishing valid ethical theories, as outlined earlier), they cannot be easily lumped together as they arrive at very different concepts of value and hence forms of moral protection.

Another common opposition to Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory is the fact that he accords all subjects-of-a-life the same inherent value. In his criticism, Wolf (2005,

pp. 54–55) calls into question why inherent value should be equal for all subjects-of-a-life, although the prerequisites for having this value are not equally pronounced in all individuals. As already outlined earlier Regan (2004[1983]), however, tenaciously insists that inherent value does not come in degrees as otherwise a basis would have to be found determining who has how much inherent value. This would automatically lead to the danger of employing unjust measures like wealth, sex, etc. The relevant similarity that all individuals having inherent value have in common, is the subject-of-a-life criterion defined by Regan (2004[1983]), whereby he sets the important demarcation line that determines whether an individual has or does not have inherent value at all.

What has to be critically reflected, however, is the fact that the characteristics combined in the subject-of-a-life criterion themselves are not equally pronounced by all mentally sound mammals older than a year, e.g. memory. For Regan (2004[1983]), it seems to suffice that these individuals simply do possess these abilities in some form, no matter how well-developed. Relatedly Benz-Schwarzburg (2012, p. 212) also expresses her concerns that Regan (2004[1983]) purposefully neglects differences in the complexity of different animals. Regan's (2004[1983]) main concern seems to logically establish an animal rights view, which pursues the idea of equal inherent value for all individuals meeting his proposed subject-of-a-life criterion and based on that grant these individuals certain basic rights. For him it seems to suffice that individuals in question possess the characteristics subsumed under the subject-of-a-life criterion – which in his opinion are essential for moral relevance – and sees the difference in the complexity of the subjects involved as only being of minor importance. In some way, Regan's (2004[1983]) courage to stick with this 'simplification' is not too far-fetched since it is without question that "there are significant individual differences even among members of the same species" (Bekoff, 1994, p. 79). With a look at the moral status of humans, as Kaplan (2010, p. 96) rightly points out, we have to admit that the idea of all humans being equal cannot rest on the fact that all of them possess morally relevant abilities to the same extent, but on the assumption that they possess them in some way. Extending this to animals means that all of them who are likely to possess the abilities combined in Regan's (2004[1983]) subject-of-a-life criterion have to be considered morally, no matter to which species they belong. In this regard, pathocentric positions seem to have an easier job in arguing their approach as they only focus on the one ability of experiencing pleasure and pain. This ability does not seem to be that much under fire regarding its different manifestation in individuals. Looking at this position from a slightly different angle, however, it has to be said that in the end, pathocentric positions themselves do nothing different than reducing the complexity of beings by only seeing them as sentient, regardless of the other characteristics these beings

else possess. It is, however, exactly this taking into account of additional features other than mere sentience, which has to be seen as a strength of Regan's (2004[1983]) position (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 395). Instead of referring only to the lowest common denominator of sentience, representatives of animal rights positions allow for a more sophisticated view of the individuals in question, and are thereby aware of their different needs based on their abilities (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 395). Certain rights for subjects-of-a-life as they are proposed by Regan (2004[1983]) can only be guaranteed by a rights approach, but not by mere pathocentric arguments of protection: Benz-Schwarzburg (2012, p. 398) clearly illustrates this by pointing out that the right to life is not to be equated with the right to be killed painlessly. Further, as Regan (2004[1983]) elaborately explains, sentience in the sense of experiencing improved or diminished welfare can fall short when it comes to ethical assessments, because individuals do not necessarily have to suffer or be aware of harms that happen to them, but still undergo harmful situations.

The fact that Regan (2004[1983]) incorporates different abilities, e.g. preference autonomy, memory, beliefs, in his rights approach must not be misunderstood in the way that he does not attach importance to sentience as well; only, in his approach, sentience is not the single criterion for moral consideration.[51] By establishing the harm principle, which is tightly connected to the respect principle, he clearly regards sentience as an important part of his theory; but what makes his theory so strong is that he anchors sentience in a much more stable construct by postulating the inherent value and tying certain basic rights to it than it is the case in concepts where only pathocentric arguments are employed. What we can see is thus that, despite qualms about the different complexity of individuals and the determination of moral boundaries, such an animal rights approach as set up by Regan (2004[1983]) does certainly have its justification in the discussion of animal ethics.

While Regan (2004[1983]) is able to give a good ethical theory for every-day moral problems in our dealings with animals, the solutions he gives for some exceptional moral cases are unsatisfying (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 212; Grimm, 2013, p. 63). The most famous example, described by Regan (2004[1983]) himself, is the so-called 'lifeboat case': In this scenario four people and a dog are on a lifeboat which holds only four individuals, posing the question whose life should be sacrificed in order to rescue the other four

[51] Interestingly, however, in later works, Regan (2007, pp. 86–87) does not insist on the subject-of-a-life criterion any longer, but emphasises sentience as the sufficient criterion for being taken into account morally. Nevertheless, since Regan's (2004[1983]) initial theory, as described in his main work, rests upon the subject-of-a-life criterion, and can be seen as a very plausible approach to the topic of animal ethics, this thesis focuses on his original point of view.

Regan's (2004[1983]) solution of this dilemma is to throw the dog overboard. Even though all five individuals have an equal right not to be harmed based on their equal inherent value, "the death of any of the four humans would be a greater prima facie loss, and thus a greater prima facie harm, than would be true in the case of the dog", because the opportunities of satisfaction that would be foreclosed in the case of death would be greater for the humans than they would be for the dog (Regan, 2004[1983], p. 324). This, however, indicates that Regan (2004[1983]) is willing to create differences in the treatment of subjects-of-a-life (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 212) and that he ascribes humans a richer life, which in the end can become a moral justification in difficult cases (Grimm, 2013, p. 63). As Benz-Schwarzburg (2012, p. 213) rightly criticises, in exceptional cases Regan (2004[1983]) yet finally does give weight to differences in the complexity of individuals – differences which were originally said to be levelled out in the rights approach by assigning each and every subject-of-a-life the same inherent value (Benz-Schwarzburg, 2012, p. 213). Nevertheless, Regan (2004[1983]) himself points to the exceptional character of this example. It is only fair to admit Regan's (2004[1983]) elaborate and coherent theory this quite unsatisfying answer to an all too artificially constructed situation (as Huth, 2013a, p. 114 calls the example) as the theory in general is able to give a clear, feasible ethical basis for animal rights ethics, especially when it comes to everyday moral questions.

4.2.4 Virtue ethics – an alternative approach

By employing Regan's (2004[1983]) deontological approach, this work follows an argumentation from moral individualism and was already differentiated from Singer's (Singer, 2009[1975]) utilitarian position, another form relating to moral individualism (Grimm et al., 2016, p. 84). There is, however, a very different third main approach of normative ethics (Hursthouse & Pettigrove, 2016, s.p.), which has become more and more relevant within animal ethics since the 1990s (Grimm et al., 2016, p. 88) and will be outlined shortly: virtue ethics. Originating from the famous philosopher Aristotle (Grimm et al., 2016, p. 88), virtue ethics was the dominant direction of ethics in the Antiquity, but has been nearly totally replaced by deontology and utilitarianism in the 18th century (Petrus, 2015, p. 393). Since the end of the 20th century several authors, like Walker (2007), Hursthouse (2011), and Rowlands (2012b) have been dealing with the concept of virtue ethics in the animal context.

Other than deontology and utilitarianism which focus on moral duties or on the consequences of an action, respectively, virtue ethics emphasises the virtue or moral character of the one who is acting (Borchers, 2010, p. 2784; Petrus, 2015, p. 393; Hursthouse & Pettigrove, 2016, s.p.). Thereby it tries to answer the question of 'How should I be?' (Borchers, 2010, p. 2784; Petrus, 2015, p. 393). In virtue ethics, morally right is therefore what a virtuous person would do (Borchers, 2010, p. 2784). Hursthouse and Pettigrove (2016, s.p.) defines virtue as:

> "an excellent trait of character. It is a disposition, well entrenched in its possessor – something that, as we say, goes all the way down, unlike a habit such as being a tea-drinker – to notice, expect, value, feel, desire, choose, act, and react in certain characteristic ways. To possess a virtue is to be a certain sort of person with a certain complex mindset".

It is important to note that virtues as moral qualities are not innate but acquired and strengthened over a lifetime and hence, acting virtuously is nothing that 'accidentally happens once in a while' (Petrus, 2015, p. 393). There are a lot of different virtues (Petrus, 2015, p. 393), of which some examples are justice, prudence, or honesty (Borchers, 2010, p. 2784). Philosophers following the approach of virtue ethics are convinced that it is possible to recognise certain attitudes and characteristics as virtuous against the background of what it means to be human and what it means to lead a good life (eudaimonia; Borchers, 2010, p. 2785). Virtues are characterised by a descriptive as well as a normative component (Petrus, 2015, p. 393).

By pursuing a very different approach, virtue ethicists doubt that certain impartial, rational criteria exist and can decide whether a certain act is morally good or bad as the common theories of deontology and utilitarianism suggest (Petrus, 2015, p. 393). Especially concerning animal ethics, they criticise that these theories reduce morality to a certain criterion, e.g. sentience, by trying to answer which animals are to be considered morally, thereby fully neglecting the complex phenomenon of being in the world, and being in it in specific contexts, as Grimm et al. (2016, p. 88) briefly summarise. According to a virtue ethics approach it is more desirable to act according to certain virtues that make up a good person and enable her to lead a good life, than by simply following an abstract principle (Grimm et al., 2016, pp. 88–89). An important point is the fact that virtue ethics tries to include the acting person with all her personal relationships, motives, inclinations, and goals, whereas other positions often try to act from a neutral third-person perspective (Petrus, 2015, p. 393; Grimm et al., 2016, p. 89).

What is problematic about the virtue ethics approach, however, can mostly be found in the two components of the virtues themselves: firstly, it is nearly impossible to give

a proper description of a virtue that the majority of people agree upon, and secondly, often there is great difficulty in making it sufficiently intelligible why a certain virtue is desirable and why it should be decisive over the moral goodness of an act without being all to subjective (Petrus, 2015, p. 393). Furthermore, there are conflicting virtues and critics doubt that virtues alone can give sufficient moral orientation, even suggesting that virtue ethics might be more appropriate as a supplementing factor to already existing theories than an independent position (Petrus, 2015, pp. 394, 395).

Besides all criticism, however, it might be conceivable to approach the question of objectification of animals used for meat production from a virtue ethics point of view. This could provide new perspectives on the topic, aside from those known from moral individualism. The focus put on the (virtues of the) acting persons could be especially interesting as it would present the roles of consumers and producers in a different light and furthermore contribute to the relation of humans to these animals.

4.3 Final thoughts

Despite critical considerations, Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights view is recognised as one of the main contributions to animal ethics and is characterised by its elaborate exposition. With his theory, Regan (2004[1983]) is able to constitute an intelligible basis for the inclusion of animals into our moral community, and beyond that he gives clear practical advice for actually occurring moral problems concerning the interaction of humans and animals (Schleißing & Grimm, 2012, p. 69). The strength of Regan's (2004[1983]) theory is that he makes the effort of developing an animal rights position analogous to our understanding of human rights based on the model of interhuman morality and is prepared to accord animals certain basic rights. He has the courage to evolve a deontological approach within animal ethics in such detail and is able to lay out his position comprehensibly. Regan (2004[1983]) uses transparent and reflected arguments, which becomes especially apparent concerning the difficulties arising from the subject-of-a-life criterion. His attitude of being open towards the inclusion of cases that are not that clear (e.g. marginal cases, certain species, etc.) is of great importance to me as it is exactly this what makes his theory credible and reliable.

Regan's (2004[1983]) view is classified as an abolitionist position, the goal of which it is to abolish any type of animal use for human purposes (Grimm et al., 2016, p. 79)

and therefore is perceived as a rather radical approach (Gottwald, 2015, p. 132).[52] Hence, his theory results in quite ambitious claims regarding our common practice with animals. However, since he grounds these demands in a well-reasoned theory, he is able to raise awareness for the issue of animal ethics and specific problems regarding our use of animals (Schleißing & Grimm, 2012, pp. 69–70). This 'irritating factor' of his theory has to be seen as having great potential because it encourages people to scrutinise unquestioned habits and customs. As Regan (2004[1983], pp. lii–liii) himself confesses: "Certainly some of the conclusions I reach have surprised even me, and without having tried to do so, the book now appears to contain something to upset just about every special interest group". One of these special interest groups certainly is the meat-eating population of Western industrialised countries. Regan (2004[1983]) does not only argue against meat consumption as such, his theory also clearly shows that objectification of animals used for meat production is no ethically justifiable solution for the meat paradox. Thereby, he leaves no option to view meat eating as morally harmless. For people who already have moral intuitions against eating meat which lead them to experience the meat paradox as a discomfort of cognitive dissonance, objectification therefore is no ethically legitimate solution of this dilemma. It can still be seen as a superficial possibility to overcome the dissonance, but from an animal rights position it is highly objectionable. So, whichever way one looks at it, meat eaters do have to face the fact that within an animal rights position, meat eating and objectification as the attempt to justify it are ethically reprehensible. Once we accept this inconvenient truth and follow Regan (2004[1983]) to recognise his stance on animal rights, we have to call most of our socially established forms of interaction with animals into question, as Regan (2004[1983], p. 329) puts it:

> "Thus has the case for animal rights been offered. If it is sound, then, like us, animals have certain basic moral rights, including in particular the fundamental right to be treated with the respect that, as possessors of inherent value, they are due as a matter of strict justice [...] It remains to be asked whether our institutions or practices give animals the justice they are due".

I strongly believe that in days like these, where environmental and sociopolitical issues tied to them are on the rise and a new sensibility towards animals is noticeable (Herzog, 2011[2010], 12; Grimm & Hartnack, 2013, p. 372; Dirscherl, 2015, p. 329; Grimm et al., 2016, p. 81), it is our responsibility to reflect on the issue of meat and our relationship with animals (used for meat production). When Huth (2013a, p. 111) states that criticism

[52] Welfarist positions, as opposed to abolitionist positions, do not demand the total dissolution of animal use (including slaughtering them), but focus on the improvement of the living conditions of animals that are used by humans (Gottwald, 2015, p. 132; Grimm et al., 2016, p. 79).

of current forms of human-animal interaction needs a solid basis within society in order to elicit change, then I think there is good reason to assume that we have reached a point where we not only have to but also are able to seriously consider a reconceptualisation of the human-animal relationship. And this task addresses us all, to use Plous' (1993, p. 43) words:

> "Issues relating to the use of animals affect us all because each of us has, at one time or another, made use of animals. Human societies the world over have been built on the backs of animals, and human beings the world over continue to derive nourishment and pleasure from the use of animals".

Humans have long taken their alleged superiority over 'the other animals' for granted which results in wide-ranging consequences for the treatment of animals and becomes apparent in the ethical debate concerning human-animal interactions (Thurnherr, 2013, pp. 145–147). Rethinking established views (e.g. viewing animals as resources for humans), socially accepted habits (e.g. consuming animals as meat), approved strategies (e.g. objectifying animals used for meat production), etc. is of course no easy task, not least because so many fields are involved: politics, legislation, ecology, economy, culture, health care, science, etc. (Regan, 1985, p. 14; Steiger, 2002, p. 230; Ritvo, 2007, p. 121; Grimm & Hartnack, 2013, p. 371; Lemke, 2015, p. 52). As an applied science, however, animal ethics can give the needed orientation in such sociopolitical questions, especially when following an interdisciplinary approach, substantiating its statements with (empirical) research-findings (Schleißing & Grimm, 2012, p. 71). How much such research-based orientation then actually translates into a change of action cannot be answered yet. However, present enhanced social attentiveness to our dealings with animals in general and especially to the issue of meat as well as an increasing awareness of what to eat, allow for hope (Regan, 2004[1983], p. xliv; Bilewicz et al., 2011, p. 201; Rothgerber, 2012, pp. 1, 2; Fitzgerald, 2015, pp. 74, 132), particularly where the unquestioned and currently extraordinary high consumption of meat is concerned.

Eventual changes will only take place slowly if they do. Since practices like eating meat are tied to traditions, no immediate changes of such practices are possible (Huth, 2013b, p. 268). Furthermore, in order to alter this habit, beliefs must change (Regan, 1985), which will certainly take quite some time (Rippe, 2002, p. 241). Trummer (2015, p. 76) therefore appeals to not unthinkingly accept our daily consumption of meat as a given matter, but to encourage young people to critically reflect on it, and hopes for a responsible and constructive cooperation of several stakeholders in order to remodel our culturally-shaped unquestioned habit of meat eating. Facing the fact that rethinking the issue of meat and our relationship to the animals involved will not happen at once, however,

should neither discourage us from taking action nor should it question the potential of Regan's (2004[1983]) strong claims to find practical implementation. As already expressed, it is animal ethics that can give well-argued guidelines regarding current sociopolitical issues, and hence, Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights theory can be seen as a landmark in a movement of rethinking the present human-animal relationship that is currently taking place. What we, however, have to realise is, that we as humans have a moral responsibility for animals and that every single one of us is a shaping force of the present (and future) human-animal relationship.

Chapter 5

Abstract

This work investigates the topic of animal objectification in the context of the issue of meat from a philosophical perspective by building on psychological theory, starting with the meat paradox, which describes the tension of loving animals and at the same time loving meat.

Employing theoretical and empirical psychological findings, the ambivalent relationship between humans and animals, manifesting in the meat paradox, can be described as a cognitive dissonance resulting in an unpleasant feeling. It has been shown that one strategy applied by meat eaters in order to overcome the dissonance of eating former living beings they usually care about is to deny the animal certain characteristics. This aspect of denial is also found in the concept of objectification, i.e. turning a subject into an object and hence denying its subject status as a possibility to handle the meat paradox. As soon as a subject is reduced to an object, it does not have to be considered from an ethical standpoint any longer, which alleviates the meat eaters' dissonance.

Since the reconstruction of the psychological theory underlying the meat paradox unveils that the issue of meat carries a strong ethical claim, an effort is made within this work to examine the concept of objectification from a philosophical point of view. To this end, firstly the concept of human objectification developed by Martha Nussbaum (1995) is adapted with regard to animals used for meat production. This results in the formulation of four distinct denials indicative of animal objectification. These denials are further underlined by practical examples from the pork industry of Western industrialised countries which demonstrates that objectification of animals is a common socially established practice. Secondly, Tom Regan's (2004[1983]) animal rights view is applied to the topic to ethically evaluate animal objectification. The present analysis shows that the four features of animal objectification are ethically reprehensible. As a result, it can be concluded that although animal objectification is a common strategy to deal with the meat paradox and to overcome the accompanying cognitive dissonance, it is ethically objectionable pursuant to an animal rights position.

Chapter 6

Zusammenfassung

Ausgehend von psychologischen Erkenntnissen über das sogenannte Fleischparadoxon, welches die Spannung des menschlichen Verhaltens einerseits Tiere zu lieben, andererseits aber ihr Fleisch zu essen, beschreibt, wird in dieser Arbeit die Objektifizierung von Tieren anhand des Themas Fleisch von einem philosophischen Blickwickel her untersucht.

Auf Grundlage theoretischer und empirischer psychologischer Ergebnisse ist es möglich dieses ambivalente Verhältnis des Menschen Tieren gegenüber als kognitive Dissonanz, welche in einem Unbehagen resultiert, zu beschreiben. Eine Möglichkeit für Fleischesser mit der Tatsache zurecht zu kommen, dass sie das Fleisch ehemals lebendiger Wesen, deren Wohl und Wehe ihnen eigentlich am Herzen liegen, verzehren, besteht darin, bestimmte Eigenschaften Tieren abzusprechen. Diese Komponente des Absprechens findet sich auch im Konzept der Objektifizierung: Sobald Tieren ihr Subjektstatus abgesprochen wird und sie als Objekte wahrgenommen werden, entfällt scheinbar jegliche moralische Verantwortung ihnen gegenüber, da Objekte keine moralischen Ansprüche haben. Objektifizierung ist also eine Strategie mit dem Fleischparadoxon umzugehen.

Diese Rekonstruktion der psychologischen Zugangsweise zeigt, dass der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Fleischparadoxon eine starke ethische Komponente innewohnt. Daher besteht der philosophische Anspruch dieser Arbeit darin, die Objektifizierung von Tieren sowohl theoretisch zu definieren als auch ihren ethischen Gehalt zu beleuchten. Zu diesem Zwecke wird Martha Nussbaums (1995) Konzept der Objektifizierung von Frauen auf Tiere, welche zur Fleischproduktion herangezogen werden, umgelegt, was zu einer Formulierung von vier Merkmalen tierlicher Objektifizierung führt. Praktische Beispiele der aktuellen Schweinehaltung in der westlichen industrialisierten Welt untermauern diese Merkmale und verdeutlichen, dass Objektifizierung von Tieren eine gängige, sozial anerkannte Praxis ist. Die ethische Evaluierung erfolgt mithilfe von Tom Regans (2004[1983]) Tierrechtstheorie, wobei klar ersichtlich wird, dass die tierliche Objektifizierung ethisch verwerflich ist. Objektifizierung von Tieren ist demnach zwar eine psychologische Strategie, um mit der kognitiven Dissonanz des Fleischparadoxons umzugehen, stellt jedoch, ethisch betrachtet, ein eindeutig problematisches Verhalten dar.

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