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Intersectional oppression across species boundaries:

Swedish dairy production as force of oppressive ideology and practice

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Abstract

This study demonstrates that the anthropocentric human-animal divide perpetuates violent ideologies and practices by emphasising the intersectionality of oppression across species boundaries. Taking the practice of Swedish dairy farming and inherent ideologies as a case of such intersectional oppression, the Othering of bovines and their treatment as means of production is problematised. This is done by discussing the political and social investment into pro-animal welfare ideologies as distinctly Swedish values, which are believed to create added value in national dairy production and serve to portray the farming of cows as progressive and ethically justifiable. Drawing on conceptual frames of Critical Animal Studies and employing a critical realist approach to intersectionality, the study examines online material of key stakeholders of the Swedish dairy industry as well as semi-structured interviews with dairy farmers in Skåne, Sweden. The study shows that key practices and beliefs of Swedish dairy production and consumption serve as tool and impetus to cultivate processes of social exclusion, primarily by determining cow's economic "use value" over human-identified social differences, which holds shared discriminatory logics as other processes of social exclusion.

Keywords: intersectionality of oppression, speciesism, animal welfarism, Swedish dairy farming, critical animal studies

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Abbreviations

AMS	Automatic Milking Systems
BSE	Bovine spongiform encephalopathy
CAS	Critical Animal Studies
EU	European Union
LRF	Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund
MPA	Milk Propaganda Association
UDAW	Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare

1. Introduction

> Being a dairy farmer today implies challenges that are difficult to imagine for those who do not themselves have to stand there every morning. With cows that are healthy and happy and produce fantastic Swedish milk, but do not have a clue about just how unprofitable they are[1] (LRF 2016a; my translation)

With this casual depiction of cows as unintelligible but otherwise "happy" and well-functioning dairy producers, the Federation of Swedish Farmers (Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund, short LRF) presented their new phone helpline to provide farmers with advice and support. Dairy farming is becoming more and more unprofitable in Sweden, forcing about five farmers weekly to give up dairy farming for good (LRF, 2016b).

This long-term milk crisis is presented as a unique issue of Swedish dairy production since it is said to exist due to Swedish added value (svensk mervärde). The Swedish Board of Agriculture (Jordbruksverket) summarises that such added value is created through higher animal welfare standards, stricter production measures with lower environmental impact than the global average, and the industries' contribution to uphold the current form of agricultural landscaping and preservation of biodiversity (Jordbruksverket, 2016a). The Swedish government therefore initiated a joint effort of authorities and stakeholders to improve the situation of the dairy industry through emphasising the social importance of Swedish added value (ibid.), demonstrating that national dairy production carries significance for a distinct Swedish identity that is abstracted against some *other* type of dairy production with different values. Dominant anthropocentric ideas about human-animal relations make us believe in notions of "happy cows" grazing on idyllic Swedish pastures, as if granting them some months of access to sunlight, fresh air, and outside space would countervail lifelong confinement, repeated forced impregnation, being milked while pregnant, being bereft of their calf, and being killed once their bodies are used up.

Problematising the human-animal divide by applying a critical intersectional analysis to the example of bovine's oppression in dairy farming sheds light on the similarities of human and nonhuman domination and accounts

[1] Att vara mjölkbonde idag innebär utmaningar som är svåra att föreställa sig för den som inte själv står där varje morgon. Med kor som är friska och glada, och producerar fantastisk svensk mjölk, men inte har en aning om hur olönsamma de är (Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund, 2016a).

for the unacknowledged and culturally dismissed agony bovines have to endure, which is important in its own right. Using intersectionality as theory and method allows contrasting underlying relations of power and situates the farming of other animals into a net of interrelated types of domination. Intersectionality can thus explain how privilege and oppression are co-constituted on a structural level since it postulates that one type of oppression cannot be understood in isolation from other forms of oppression as they mutually reinforce one another. The focus of most intersectional research lies on articulating that structural relations impact various groups of humans differently depending on their identity and positions of power. What the majority of intersectional research does not interrogate is the dominant human-animal binary, which leaves its dominant logic unquestioned and allows to de-humanise certain human groups by framing them as closer to animality and nature and which generally subordinates other animals (Fitzgerald & Pellow 2014, p. 33).

Intersectional scholar Ange-Marie Hancock states that "from a political point of view, people for whom no compassion can be generated are seen as less than human and therefore are politically and practically expendable" (2011, p. 16). But what about those beings who will always remain "less" than human? What does it mean to be human, if our moral considerability rests on, and is made possible through, the de-politicised and rigorous domination and exploitation of nonhuman beings? Critically discussing such questions holds the potential to reform social relations to be more compassionate, because oppression does not stop at species barriers, it rather so begins there in many ways.

In order to facilitate a critical intersectional examination of these underlying structures of interspecies domination with the example of the Swedish milk crisis, this study draws on, and contributes to, the field of Critical Animal Studies (CAS). By viewing the domination of humans, other animals, and nature as inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing, CAS provides the necessary conceptual frame to include species difference into otherwise human-exclusive intersectional approaches (Cudworth, 2014; Hovorka, 2012).

An interspecies intersectional approach allows to contrast the Swedish added value argument as an implicit claim of Swedish superiority by relating it to

the speciesist[2] ideologies framing the use of bovine's bodies and bodily fluids as means of food production and to relate those logics of oppression to wider spheres of domination. Farming other animals is motivated by economic interests (Nibert 2002) and is legitimised by dominant belief systems like "carnism", which constructs certain species as "edible" and thus killable (Joy, 2010). The culturally embedded practice of dairy farming uses certain female bovines for the accumulation of capital by using their bodies, bodily fluids, and offspring as means of production. The de-politicised notion of "healthy and happy" cows in Swedish dairy production is thus related to multiple dominant belief systems. Through illustrating the intersectionality over the human/animal divide, this study adds to the literature arguing that the inclusion of nonhuman animals is necessary for consistent intersectional research and to uphold the credibility of justice-oriented theorising and normatively driven politics (e.g., Deckha 2008; Hovorka, 2012).

1.1 Aim of research

The aim of this study is to emphasise the intersectionality of dominations across the human-animal divide. This is done by utilising an interspecies intersectional approach to problematise Swedish dairy production and implicit constructions of farmed bovines with related notions of a distinct pro-animal welfare ideology, serving as illustration for the co-constitution of privilege and oppression on a material and structural level which upholds the 'human' as dominant and central category.

The inquiry is led by the following research question:

- In what ways is the example of Swedish dairy farming and related speciesist pro-animal welfare ideologies an illustration for the intersectionality of oppressions across the human-animal divide?

In order to address the example of Swedish dairy farming and related dominant ideologies, semi-structured interviews with Swedish dairy farmers and online representations of key actors of the Swedish dairy industry are scrutinised. Paying

[2] The term 'speciesism' was introduced in 1970 by Richard Ryder to criticise human discrimination of other animals as irrational and unjust, since it is, similar to discrimination based on ideas of 'race,' mainly based on physical appearance (1999). The term gained popularity after being used in Peter Singer's book *Animal Liberation* (1975). I use speciesism much like sexism and racism are used to refer to ideologies and systems of shared belief systems legitimating some desired or actual social hierarchy (Wyckoff 2014: 722).

attention to common constructions and descriptions of bovines as well as to the materially manifested oppression of farmed bovines allows to counteract common romanticised pictures of “happy cows”. The here problematised example is thus used to illustrate how the dominant human-animal divide is of relevance to interrelated and mutually reinforcing types of domination. This study thus stresses that ignoring the exclusion of other animals prevents to sufficiently understand structures of social exclusion and domination.

1.2 Disposition

This introduction is followed by a chapter on the relevant background of the above presented research problem, providing further context on the field of CAS as well as the political significance of farming bovines. Chapter three is dedicated to situate this study within the body of relevant previous literature providing the context to interspecies research studying oppression.

In chapter four, the theoretical and methodological framework is presented by first discussing intersectionality as theory and method, which is then augmented by a critical realist perspective to facilitate the formulation of an inclusive intersectional frame accounting for species difference. The last part of chapter four presents applied methods and the two sets of material, one consisting of semi-structured interviews with dairy farmers and telephone interviews with personnel from LRF Dairy Sweden, and the other of selected online material of key actors and organisations in the Swedish dairy industry.

Chapter five presents the analytic discussion of above posed research question and is structured into two parts, starting by identifying how farmed bovines are constructed and categorised in Swedish dairy production to prepare for a theoretically oriented discussion on the mutual constitution of agency and privilege. The second part of the analysis identifies methods of control in dairy farming by looking at the practical subjugation of farmed bovines. The identified theoretical and practical manifestation of cow’s oppression is then situated into the problematised discourse of Swedish added value and its investments in animal welfare, to demonstrate the entanglements of the oppression of other animals into wider spheres of domination. Chapter six covers a final concluding discussion.

2. Background

It may seem at first glance that a study on farmed bovines is awkwardly, if at all, related to feminism, gender studies, and political science. The objective of this chapter and the following literature review is therefore to spell out the interconnections between the oppression of humans and other animals to provide necessary background information to the usefulness of including other animals into political research. Conceptual frames of CAS allow to contextualise how dairy production and consumption in Sweden continue to serve as bearer of cultural and societal identity, inadvertently influencing processes of domination.

2.1 Critical Animal Studies

Including other animals into social research accounts for the entanglement of oppression over species barriers. Critically examining dominant binary hierarchisation de-centralises the human subject through questioning the privilege we gain from inflicting suffering on other animals (Nibert, 2003; Wolch & Jody, 1998). As interdisciplinary field of research, CAS developed from various schools of thought. In a broader sense, CAS draws on critical theory, (eco)feminism, and anarchism and was formulated as opposition to and delineation from the anthropocentric fields of animal studies (including animal testing and vivisection) and human-animal studies (reinforcing the socially constructed human-animal dichotomy by viewing other animals as lacking agency) (Nocella *et al*., 2014; Taylor & Twine, 2014). CAS is thus not concerned with researching about or on other animals, but critically engages in studying the condition of all species as part of larger power structures. This focus makes CAS to an overtly political and action-oriented field with a clear normative stance against anthropocentrism and the goal to end the oppression of all animals, including humans, and nature (Taylor & Twine, 2014).

A basic connection between CAS and feminism is therefore their shared normative commitment to vanguard and dismantle discrimination of devalued groups in (human) society. Surely, most of feminist research focuses on human issues, and CAS, too, is studying humans, albeit with the incentive to challenge notions of human exclusivity and superiority. Such self-criticism can be beneficial for feminist analyses, since violent logics upholding dominant oppressive norms

are interrelated (Nibert, 2002). Ignoring species as a relevant social difference or denying our own animality thus uphold a false and destructive definition of ourselves and our relation to Others by ignoring that the often taken for granted species difference is fundamental to the entanglement of social exclusion and domination.

2.1.1. Terminology

Understanding and challenging processes of domination requires us to rethink our relations to, and our conceptions of, other animals. The aim of such inclusive scholarly work is therefore not to draw fixed boundaries of animality, humanness, femininity, or the like, but to highlight how underlying logics of power operationalise such categorisations of difference to reproduce exclusion and domination across seemingly rigid boundaries.

In order not to replicate discourse further subordinating already marginalised groups, I avoid using speciesist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory language commonly used to describe and normalise the exploitation of Others. Language distances us from the reality of consuming other animal's bodies and their bodily fluids through ascribing the products we make of them as the essence of their existence (Adams, 1997). For these reasons, I seek to refrain from using language that maintains anthropocentric prejudice against other animals. For instance, I refer to "humans and other animals" as an alternative to the dominant human/animal binary that produces hierarchical rankings of living beings through terms like "people", "nonhuman", or "animal" (Nibert 2002, p. xv). Using the term "bovine" whenever referring to the group of domesticated beings farmed in the dairy industry makes the point that they are not "livestock". The common referral "dairy cow" is a human construction which naturalises the speciesist and sexist oppression of a particular group of bovines. Referring to their exploitation as being "farmed" stresses that it is something that is done to them, instead of claiming that farming is what other animals exist for.

Linguistic and conceptual interconnections of interspecies oppression are addressed in further detail in chapter five. The following part maps out the relevant background to the historical significance and image cow's milk has in

Swedish culture, showing how dairy production and consumption are used to push political and corporate interests of accumulating profit.

2.2 Milk as driving force for political and economic development

Drinking cow's milk is highly normalised in Swedish society and enjoys a distinctly positive image. This was not always the case, as daily consumption of animal products was seen as lavish before the intensification of animal agriculture (Jönsson, 2013). Sweden's political transformation from a rather poor agricultural nation to a developed industrial state incorporated the dairy industry as key part of this industrialisation process, which also meant a masculinisation of dairy work (Sommestad, 1994). Traditionally, dairy work was seen as women's work since the strong cultural connection perceived between women and milk made it shameful for a man to milk a cow (Sommestad 1994, p. 60). Increasing mechanisation and politicisation of dairy farming transformed the trait from being associated with nature and femininity to new symbolic and cultural images resembling a progressive masculine industry. Widespread consensus on milk's wholesomeness and the capacity of dairy farming to constantly develop through pasteurising, excessive breeding, testing, and effective marketing provided grounds to successfully promote cow's milk as human food (Jönsson, 2013).

Once production intensified, the dairy sector was quickly interlinked with political decision-making to enable investors, politicians, and governmental bodies to act fairly unrestricted and without political controversy or opposition (Jönsson, 2005). In 1923 the Milk Propaganda Association (MPA) (Föreningen Mjölkpropagandan) was founded with the goal of bringing together farmers, dairy representatives, politicians, doctors, teachers, scientists, and consumers, and was financed by farmers, dairies, and the Swedish Parliament (Jönsson 2005, p. 34). Political investment in milk also reached across Scandinavian countries, and shared interests in dairy were used as meeting-points for political coalition in the 1930s, to promote increases in milk consumption by creating new outlets for sales, and to foster pro-dairy values (Jönsson 2013, p. 129).

During the 1930s, the MPA promoted milk as a symbol for racial purity, industrial progress, and health to strengthen notions of white supremacy (Jönsson 2005, p. 37-41). Lactase persistence, the genetic disposition to digest lactose in

adulthood, is especially prevalent in populations of Northern Europe, so the capacity to consume cow's milk, which was promoted as nutritious and pure beverage, was directly applied as distinguisher facilitating racial domination (Jönsson, 2005; Wiley, 2004). Today, lactase impersistence, which pertains to the majority of humans, is still framed as deviation from the norm and medicalised by referring to it with terms such as 'lactose intolerance' or 'lactose maldigesters' (Wiley, 2004). Ideological investment into cow's milk thus enabled processes of social exclusion by serving as a bearer for identity construction.

As one of the least contested products, cow's milk remains to be promoted as a nutritious and natural food item. The MPA first implemented and financed school milk programs to propagate health benefits for human children by organising lectures, film screenings, and competitions (Jönsson 2005, p. 33). Dairies still advertise their brands in school cafeterias today (Arla, 2016a; Kalvin.mu, 2016), which would not be possible for any other business in Sweden (Jönsson, 2013).

Having this short political trajectory of dairy in mind, it becomes apparent that the milk crisis of uncompensated Swedish added value constitutes a politically laden issue weighing Swedish values and beliefs about animal welfarism against others which are presented as less ethical, unsustainable, and more exploitative. Strict rules and high standards of production are seen as socially important and environmentally sustainable preconditions for animal agriculture, but result in an inability to compete on an international level as they cost more.

Welfarist concerns to create more "humane" or "sustainable" forms of exploiting and killing other animals do little for the affected individuals and are more about reinforcing Swedish production as progressive in terms of environmental and ethical awareness. Even if considering someone's welfare while being exploited is based on the recognition that they can suffer, it does not take away their categorisation and treatment as "food". Such welfarist beliefs are more about lulling humans into complacency to accept and support the oppression of other animals for human privilege and the accumulation of profit (Svärd 2015, p.8).

The political arena is largely equated with the human only, which excludes the majority of sentient beings. Social movements pushing for the adoption of a Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare (UDAW) at the UN General Assembly are an important sign that other animal's welfare is perceived as a necessary subject on the global political agenda (IFAW, 2014), but they do not question *if* other animals should be used, but rather *how* we use them. Besides providing ground for cultural and national identity construction (Svärd 2015), such welfarist ideologies legitimise the oppression of other animals and depicts their existence as motivated and fulfilled through the "purpose" we humans ascribe to them.

Nevertheless, debates around the consumption of animal products are shifting. Significant environmental impacts of animal agriculture, contributing greatly to global greenhouse gas emissions, water scarcity, deforestation, species extinction, unsustainable land use, overfishing, and waste production (Steinfeld *et al.,* 2006) make it to an internationally relevant political problem. In 2010, the United Nations (UN) urged for a global move away from meat and dairy consumption to work against global inequality, world hunger, and human-induced climate change (UNEP, 2010). Additionally, more and more research shows that over-consuming animal products leads to a wide range of human health issues (Läkaren för Framtiden, 2016; Nibert 2002, p. 121-127). Previous scholarly debates provide a well-founded basis to critically interrogate the entanglements of human and nonhuman domination and are discussed in the following chapter.

3. Literature Review

Viewing the exploitation of cows from a critical feminist perspective and with established conceptual frames of CAS positions the study in a broad context of interrelated fields of research. Besides introducing the reader to relevant previous studies, this literature review illustrates is that the commonly ignored factor of species difference is constitutive to social differences and structures commonly theorised in intersectional analyses. The first section shows how the subordination of other animals is embedded in human identity formation and reviews topical research conducted on critically studying bovines exploitation as gendered and speciesist type of human domination. In the second section, the discussion is broadened to present a selection of works proposing conceptual frameworks

concerned with interspecies oppression as interrelated with, and embedded in, human-nonhuman-nature relations.

3.1 The construction of the Other is political

Many continue to believe that the production of milk can happen without harming the individuals producing it. The previous feminist works discussed in this section serve to show that the exploitation and domination of farmed bovines are addressed as politically and theoretically relevant issue and aid in explaining and motivating the inclusion of other animals into social research.

Important research addressing the structural impediments of farmed animal's objectification was done by ecofeminist researchers who highlighted the links between the social construction of gender and other social categories to show how these stand in connection to other animals and nature (Tong 2009, p. 273; Warren 2002, p. 41). The anthropocentric idea of homo sapiens (latin for "wise man") as superior being seeks to justify human domination over all other life forms, thus framing the natural world and other animals as subordinate objects (Wyckoff 2014, p. 5). Treating other animals and nature as resources therewith becomes naturalised and de-politicised. This way of thinking about ourselves as superior species bears profound significance for social hierarchisation, since the very idea of 'civilisation' is grounded on a move away from animality to humanness (Deckha 2008, p. 251-253). However, the category "human" is as much an imagined construct as other naturalised social categories of difference, and any attempt to define the essence of such constructs will be partial and inaccurate (Deckha, 2006). Since human identity construction relied on the differentiation from other animals, species difference cannot be excluded as relevant and constitutive construction of difference, as it directly relates to the various differences with which processes of exclusion, such as de-humanisation, are cultivated and normalised (Deckha, 2008).

Oppression, therefore, stretches over species barriers due to the shared mechanisms of exclusion and social ordering through, for instance, stereotyping. Common ideas promoting milk, such as purity, nurture, life, comfort, nutrition, and goodness describe female attributes which are used to justify women's oppression (Adams, 1993, 1997; Gaard, 2013; Otomo, 2015). Stevens et al.

researched humanised images of cows in advertising to see how they work to reinforce gender ideologies (2013, p. 159). They found in advertisements similar to the Swedish *Bregottfabriken*[3], in which cows are represented in human terms, that such depiction of cows prevents the viewer to perceive the cows as oppressed while subliminally underlining their differences to human (Stevens *et al.*, 2013, p. 164). By anthropomorphising the cows, they are seemingly brought closer to us humans to suggest that cows happily share their abundant supply of milk with us humans (ibid.). The effect of such marketing strategies is a reinforcement of anthropocentric ideology by fostering beliefs normalising human domination over nature, objectifying and feminising cows, and generally intensifying our disconnect from other animals (Stevens *et.al.*, 2013, p. 171). I will return to the example of anthropomorphising advertising in chapter five to discuss its effects on cows' agency.

The above discussed studies show that positively highlighted images about cow's milk are disconnected from the female labor that produces it, which is why "the question of *who* controls the circulation of (*whose*) milk in our economies, and *how*, is a deeply political one" (Otomo 2015, p. 224, 227, emphasis original). Rejecting other animals' agency is thus symbolically, historically, and structurally constituted by constantly being viewed "from above", pressing other animals into some uniform theoretical category (Hribal, 2007). The removal of agency and subject-hood is one of the central methods of the 'animal industrial complex', the globally operating capitalist network facilitating the total exploitation of other animals captivated in its industries (Noske 1997). Part of the infrastructure of the animal industrial complex are not only farms, slaughterhouses, and packing firms, but all corporations, businesses, and organisations profiting from the subordination of other animals, including the state (Nibert 2002). The oppressive dominant human/animal binary and implicit objectification of other animals thus enable and reinforce capitalism (Twine, 2012).

To better explain how processes of objectification and marginalisation are enabled, Carol Adams exemplifies the role of "mass terms" such as "milk" or "meat," which are used to describe seemingly abundant *things*, thereby turning

[3] Bregott is a spread made of butter and oil, sold and advertised by Arla, by depicting cows enjoying Swedish summer in idyllic nature, in which the pasture is the "Bregott factory" (Bregottfabriken).

individual beings into uniform, generally definable products (Adams 1997, p. 35, emphasis added). She refers to this process as the "de-ontologisation" of animals, which could be translated according to this distorted line of thought: "someone violates, exploits, and enslaves cows so that I can take their milk to produce dairy products" becomes "cows are used for dairy production" then "dairy comes from cows" and "cows are for dairy" and finally "dairy cow", thus "dairy", "milk", "cheese" (Adams 1997, p. 35). This illustrates that current oppressive ontologies about both women and bovines as subordinate beings proclaim and justify their exploitation through devaluing and stigmatising both groups to the extent that their subordinate roles serve as evidence that their subordination is justified (Adams 1997, p. 32). For the case of farmed bovines, this means that cow's degradation has become so internalised and normalised in our ontology of "cow" that the issue of their exploitation and abuse can even be framed as its complete opposite — ethical and compassionate, as is the case in common projections of "happy cows" or "humane meat/milk," produced with "humane slaughter".

Lewis Holloway adds to such literature exposing the objectification of animals in the animal industrial complex by highlighting that their objectification is disguised by granting them some degree of subjectivity (2007). Through exploring how particular forms of bovine subjectivity are associated with modern farming methods, his research shows that industrial "robotic milking technologies, or Automatic Milking Systems (AMS)" are promoted as progressive invention by saving time and manual labour and are said to allow more freedom for farmed bovines (ibid.). Holloway's analysis of secondary sources shows that while bovines are increasingly presented as subjects, their use in agriculture is still constituted by objectifying power structures focusing on the "representation, manipulation, and control of life" (2007, p. 1056). The for this study conducted interviews with dairy farmers add to Holloway's research by enquiring farmers about their experience with AMS and examining these accounts as in relation to underlying dominating ideologies (see 5.2.1).

3.3 Interspecies oppression in conceptual frames

Theorising intersecting oppression over the human-animal divide led to the formulation of various conceptual frameworks. According to Karen Warren's

theory of the "logic of domination", such frameworks function to explain, sustain, and legitimise relations of unjustified domination and can be identified by its common features of value-hierarchal thinking, oppositional value-dualisms, power as "power over," privilege as belonging to "Ups, not Downs," and by perceiving these measures of exclusion and domination as "logical" and "normal" (2000, p. 46-47).

David Nibert's theory of oppression explains how such "logics of power" are embedded into everyday morality with their embeddedness in state control and the economic system, resulting in the invisibility of oppressive structure at work so that both the marginalised and privileged groups perceive this as "just the way things are" (ibid., Nibert 2003, p. 20). One example for such a way of reasoning can be seen in one of Adam's earlier works, arguing that what we think of as *autonomy* when consuming other animals and their "products" is actually the *privilege* we have granted ourselves to decide over Others by oppressing them and framing their subordinate position as their natural and legitimate state of being (1993, emphasis added). Such privilege, and the consequential oppression it is built on, is valorised by producing profit that can be made through the exploitation of those frames as Others. In the case of exploiting other animals by using them as means of production, their nonhuman status is vested in state control and deeply rooted in cultural practice and oppressive ideologies, which cultivates their Otherness and strengthens human superiority (Nibert 2002).

Led by an anthropocentric understanding of the world, nonhuman oppression is thus de-politicised and framed as a matter of personal choice. If one believes in the personal being political, then oppressing Others to utilise their bodies for the production of food or any other commodity becomes a political act, not simply a matter of personal choice (Adams 1993, p. 196). This is why feminist theory lends itself to examine the practice of eating Others, because it allows to question any privilege we have granted ourselves on the ground of the imagined category "human" (Adams 1993, p. 196).

The notion of intersecting and mutually reinforcing domination is however not only relevant for feminist theory, but stretches across a variety of related fields. Greta Gaard, for instance, proposed a move toward "feminist postcolonial milk studies" through tying together the fields of feminist theory, food studies,

human animal studies, environmental studies and postcolonial studies (2013). Relating these perspectives, she argues that a critical feminist stance on the case of intersectional oppression experienced by both human and bovine mothers situates it in a nexus of ethnocentric and speciesist hegemony, culturally and economically exploiting females' ability to lactate and nurture for their offspring (Gaard 2013). Tracing the shared similarities of domination across species reveals that underlying structures at play are constitutive of relations and differences of gender and nature, thus showing that boundaries between human and other animals are part of the very structures establishing oppressive social relations.

This complex interplay of difference and oppression is framed with Erika Cudworth's concept "anthroparchy," which refers to complex social systems of dominations in which nonhuman animals and nature are subordinated and dominated by human beings as a species (2005, p. 8; 2008; 2011). Anthroparchy was developed through a macro-level analysis of social complexity and a critical realist multiple-system approach to account for the complexity and hierarchisation of difference (Cudworth 2005). The concept can be used to situate dairy farming in a nexus of capitalist industrial production, domestication, political power structures, and systemic violence such as exclusive humanism (Cudworth 2011). In her study investigating agricultural and cultural processes and practices framing and turning other animals into "meat", Cudworth argues that "the 'naturing' of animal agriculture and meat and dairy production […] are socially intersectionalised" (2008: 33). Her research shows that farming animals is linked with human spheres of oppression and inherently framed through gender relations, situating the exploitation of cows can within the larger context of the political economy and the wider system of the domination of nature (Cudworth, 2008). Cudworth's explanation of human domination over other animals and nature within this frame of social complexity is useful for this study because it provides a wider map of how interspecies dominations can be theorised. This discussion of previous literature shows that the exploitation of bovines is embedded in other spheres of domination and is constitutive of social relations.

4. Theoretical and Methodological Framework

The objective of this chapter is to present the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of this study to explain how chosen approaches are utilised in the analysis. Intersectionality is used as guiding theoretical approach of this study as it has become the primary tool in feminist analyses to study relations between various social differences and their links to identity as well as relations of power and oppression. Bringing species difference into intersectional analysis requires to re-negotiate the approach, as nonhuman animals are for the most part absent, excluded, or used as "Other" in intersectional analysis. To formulate a species-inclusive framework for intersectionality, this chapter is structured into three parts, of which the first is dedicated to discuss intersectionality theory. The second part of the chapter presents how a critical realist perspective is used to formulate a framework for interspecies intersectionality. Finally, material and methods used and applied in this study are elaborated upon.

4.1 Intersectionality

Intersectionality became a major concept of feminist analysis by incorporating the contributions of black feminist studies as a crucial part of feminist theory. Making the logic interconnection between in-group differences and their relations to wider power structures did not only contribute to gender research but is valuable to study social relations of power. Intersectionality can thus be used to bring together theoretical projects that seem detached from each other and can integrate marginalised perspectives (Davis 2008, p. 48; Lutz *et al.*, 2011, p. 9). As relatively new theoretical contribution that gained prominence as interdisciplinary approach, intersectionality is in a constant process of change. The first part of this sub-chapter reviews key features and debates of intersectional research, which are then elaborated upon in relation to the purpose of this study to emphasise the intersectionality of dominations across the human-animal divide.

4.1.1. Intersectionality in flux

Providing an exhaustive state of the art of intersectional research is well beyond the scope of this thesis (for a more detailed account of its intellectual history, see Hancock, 2016). Here, I trace relevant previous and current debates on how to

apply and conceptualise intersectionality in feminist and other normative political research projects.

Intersectional analyses were initiated and coined by feminist scholars and activists calling for more inclusive modes of analysis (Yuval-Davis 2011, p. xi). The term "intersectionality" was introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw when she discussed interrelated identity politics and violence against women within the fields of women's studies and critical legal studies (Crenshaw 1989, 1991). Early intersectional scholars thus stressed the importance of intra-group differences, arguing that racialised women experience multiple forms of oppression. Postcolonial feminists later added to this identity-driven focus of intersectionality to include North-South identity as politically relevant category, a move that had a strong influence on human rights work and the adoption of intersectional approaches in policy-making (Hancock 2011, p. 36).

Intersectionality has since become prevalent in various fields beyond feminist theory (Davis, 2008; Lykke, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 2006), such as for instance CAS (Cudworth 2014, p. 19-35), environmental politics (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2014), political science (Hancock 2007, 2011; Magnusdottir & Kronsell, 2014), psychology (Walsh, 2015), and sociology (Yeon Choo & Marx Feree, 2010). A central contribution of the approach is thus its interdisciplinary and broad focus on how belonging to multiple social categories impacts political access and exclusion (Martinez *et al.*, 2014, p. 447).

The vagueness of its methodological foundations and the lack of a clear definition of intersectionality as theory, framework, lens, paradigm, perspective, or method had been both criticised and praised and likely contributed to its successful implementation in various fields (e.g., Bowleg, 2008; Davis, 2008; McCall, 2005; Nash, 2008; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Key debates on the expandability and applicability of intersectionality relate to unresolved tensions rooted in such undefined intersectional methodology, the issue of centralising black women as quintessential intersectional subjects, vague definitions of intersectionality, and concerns of empirical validity (Nash 2008, p. 4). Since I do not attempt to address the methodological discussion on intersectionality at large, only those aspects relevant to this study are taken up in this chapter.

I understand intersectionality as theory and tool to push for theoretical and political inclusivity and to study processes of domination. Uniform methodological foundations are not needed or valid in such a broad and normative theoretical approach but are to be formulated specifically in relation to the issue in question. I therefore perceive it as more important to emphasise the underlying logic of intersectionality to reveal how differences intersect and mutually reinforce another and the processes of exclusion that follow.

The point I wish to stress here is that intersectionality will not resolve its debates if underlying power structures are not addressed in a way that questions the taken-for-granted privilege of being human. Although I am aware that including empathic concern for nonhuman animals can be met with indifference or even disgust (Twine, 2010), it can be argued that widening the intersectional approach to include the nonhuman animal Other benefits and strengthens the logic that intersectionality represents (Deckha, 2008; Fitzgerald & Pellow, 2014; Hovorka, 2012). Questioning anthropocentrism to re-negotiate social boundaries of animality, within which we reside, holds the potential to transform social relations. Being open to rethink political research and social relations in novel ways is an ongoing project, and, as Nira Yuval-Davis appositely puts it (2011, p. xiv):

> […] the global wave of the call of freedom, which is spreading in spite of many attempts at repressing it, would be able to benefit from an encompassing and empathetic intersectional approach to politics of solidarity as […] there is no 'end to politics' (as well as history) and that new constellations of power will emerge, requiring new struggles or reviving old ones just when it seems things are finally getting better.

4.1.2. The inclusion of species into intersectional analyses

Roots for species-inclusive intersectional research were laid by ecofeminist scholars pointing to the interconnectedness and mutual reinforcement of oppression over social boundaries of species, gender, 'race,' location, class, and so on (e.g., Adams, 1995; Birke, 2007; Deckha, 2008, 2012; Gaard, 1993; Harper, 2010). By calling for the inclusion and consideration of nonhuman animals, they make the point that both human and nonhuman oppression are relevant and mutually reinforcing, which is why both need to be addressed to sufficiently challenge one of them. Including nonhuman oppression on the agenda of justice-

oriented research is therefore not a detriment to otherwise human-focused projects but can improve intersectional research.

One of the key objectives of including other animals into intersectional analyses is thus that doing so addresses its own logics of exclusion (e.g., Fitzgerald & Pellow, 2014; Hovorka, 2012). Regarding other animals as more than just expandable resources for us to control and use requires to question how far we can go with human-exclusive modes of analysis and what such frames of exclusion reveal about the generation of privilege and domination. Intersectionality rests on dichotomous sense-making when abstracting levels of privilege and oppression through categories like "black" and "white" or "lesbian" and "straight". This is problematic as it relies on the production of an Other (Puar 2012, p. 52). Since logics of exclusion function similarly regardless of which difference one is excluded or dominated by, attending to the fear of moving towards greater inclusion and solidarity in relations to other animals requires reflecting on key concerns and debates around social differences, suffering, and inclusion.

Common claims against changing our relations to other animals and, for instance, seize to view and treat them as means of production, are based on the idea that human issues are more important than the suffering of other animals, which is the result of seeking to define which group constitutes the most marginalised. Through the centralisation of black women as "prototypical intersectional subjects" (Nash 2008, p. 8), intersectional theory has obscured questions of how far the approach can be expanded and to whom it applies. Since discussions usually seek to determine whether privileged individuals such as white men, for instance, can be seen as intersectional subjects or not, I am aware that considering other animals may appear to some to be beyond the point. After all, we cannot properly conceptualise how or if other animals construct identity or if they create experience through interrelated social in-group differences.

However, the point here is that determining and labelling processes of social exclusion over concepts of identity and social difference is always already limited since it requires to put oneself outside of the situation to be analysed. This is, in my understanding, how the hierarchisation of suffering, one of the major pitfalls of intersectionality, is constituted. Trying to look at social relations from a

distance to valorise the level of exclusion, or to determine if a certain type of exclusion counts, puts ourselves in a position that goes against the inclusionary ethos of intersectionality. Anthropocentric beliefs are based on the assumption that humans are fundamentally different from animals, and worrying to be devalued *like animals* just confirms that our human privilege is based on the subjugation of other animals as a group.

Recognising species as social difference thus highlights the privilege automatically granted to us through human association and identification, a privilege that is nurtured and reinforced through the abstraction of humanness being the opposite of animality. Organising various types of suffering and oppression into hierarchies leads to the omission of compassion, which thwarts political solidarity within and between politically relevant social differences (Hancock 2011, p. 4, 16-18), thus sparking exclusion and domination even more. Attempts to exclude species as a meaningful category of difference fail to acknowledge that such hierarchisation of suffering is futile since each is destructive and all forms of oppression are interlinked through the common origins of (economic) power and control (Nibert 2003, p. 6-7; Pharr 1997, p. 53).

Ange-Marie Hancock problematises intergroup competitions for victimhood and argues that determining "who has it worst" is to engage in "wilful blindness" by persistently envisioning oneself or one's group as sole victims, effectively undermining one's own agency (Hancock 2011, p. 4, 11). Similarly, determining which oppression to tackle first requires to rank inequalities and misses that they cannot be dealt with in isolation from one another (Hancock 2011, p. 5-8). Such "Oppression Olympics" denies the existence of Others' victimhood and the stratification of political power by ignoring or refusing to confront oneself with the suffering of Others (Hancock 2011, p. 14-16). Hancock refers to this way of thinking as "defiant ignorance" that functions as a defence mechanism to allow oneself to resist responsibility, making subordinated groups invisible (ibid.). This is certainly the case in the oppression of other animals if their suffering is ignored or even legitimised, as is the case when they are framed as "edible" (Joy, 2010).

Having discussed the theoretical perspective of intersectionality and problematised the missing commitment to include "species" as meaningful difference, the following section further discusses the philosophical underpinnings

of critical realism applied on the intersectionality approach of this study. Through adopting a critical realist perspective, I seek to highlight that various layers of reality shape and define the social, which is a useful perspective when problematising the anthropocentric human-animal divide. Justifying the critical realist lens to interspecies intersectionality then allows to discuss how to include "species" as a category of difference.

4.2 Critical realism

Critical realism proclaims that an objective reality exists independently of human conception, language, perception, or imagination, and views subjective interpretation about the world as influencing factor of how reality is experienced and understood (Edwards *et al.*, 2014, p. 3). Choosing a critical realist ontology as methodological frame for this thesis allows to criticise the epistemic fallacy of viewing reality only in frames of what is knowable, observable, or measurable, which is understood as an implicitly anthropocentric position that restricts comprehensive accounts of the social (Bhaskar 2008, p. 35). An advantage of theorising interspecies differences and relations with a critical realist perspective is thus its multi-layered understanding of reality.

The so-called depth ontology of critical realism highlights this stratified character of reality and distinguishes between the empirical (sensory perceptions, observations, and measurable events) the actual (in which events can occur regardless of our knowledge), and the real (referring to mechanisms and causal powers which can be exercised or formed) (Edwards *et al.*, 2014, p. 9). Reality is therewith understood as stratification of open systems and emergent entities that exist on multiple levels, as opposed to a positivist understanding of reality as measurable and definable, or as in a constructivist understanding viewing reality as constituted through discourse.

Critical realism is a useful paradigm for studying domination because the emphasis on the multiply determined character of reality avoids simplified or centralised explanations and enables to account for multiple understandings of reality, aiding to de-centralise otherwise dominant conceptualisations. This facilitates greater analytical complexity as a studied issue is not reduced to human-centred symbolic representation alone, thus avoiding essentialist claims by

distinguishing between symbolic representation and materiality (Cudworth 2005, p. 51). A critical realist view of interspecies relations thus enables to show that we cannot proclaim exact knowledge about the actuality and reality of nonhuman experience and agency, which nevertheless may exist regardless of our (in)ability to know and define it.

Applying a critical realist lens to intersectional analysis is a rather new and emerging approach, as intersectionality research is largely employed from phenomenological, constructivist, or poststructuralist perspectives (Martinez *et al.*, 2014, p. 453). The conflation of experience, theory, and knowledge in intersectional approaches led to the "epistemic fallacy" that reality is limited to knowledge construction, thus inadvertently replicating positivist claims which they seek to oppose (Martinez *et al.,* 2014, p. 450-452). They therefore argue for a critical realist lens to intersectionality in order to account for that which may be unexperienced, unexercised, or unobserved (ibid.).

While social constructivism would only allow to explain cow's oppression as construction of human thought and action as a culturally specific conceptualisation, a critical realist perspective can acknowledge cows own capacities, properties, and powers as being an element of a differentiated and stratified world. For example, bovine's oppression is materially real, but the explanation of the bovine as resource for human dairy consumption is not the cows' essence of existence, but instead facilitated by a range of factors such as anthropocentrism, capitalist commodification, speciesist property laws, a history of domestication, and so on.

A remaining question is then how to include "species" as category of difference, which first calls to reflect on the lack of consensus on how to use and define categories of difference in intersectional analysis. Below, I discuss Leslie McCall's continuum of three distinct approaches intersectional methodology, each defined by its stance on categories — anti-categorical, intra-categorical, and inter-categorical (2005). Discussing these approaches serves to provide an outline of extant intersectional approaches to methodological complexity and serves as foundation to justify the critical realist approach to intersectionality viewing categories as abstractions, which is chosen for the purpose of this study.

Anti-categorical approaches focus on deconstruction, claiming that categories do not sufficiently describe social complexity, as they are best explained as situated in discourse (McCall, 2005). Such conceptualisations are led by constructivist and poststructural thinking, emphasise situated knowledge, and claim that reality is historically and socially constructed. Martinez *et al.* argue that such work focusing on the construction of meaning via textual, discursive, and identity-focused sense-making resulted in a lack of clear ontological theorisation and bears risk of replicating approaches they actually seek to criticise (Martinez *et al.*, 2014). Approaching interspecies analysis without using categories of difference as organising ideas would not allow to problematise the significance we commonly connect to using such categorisation as grounds for legitimising notions of human superiority, and would, therefore, disregard one of the main mechanisms with which to make sense of social differences and justify domination.

Intra-categorical approaches to complexity inaugurated intersectional analysis and also dismiss categories but use them to identify social differences (McCall 2005, p. 1774). This approach aligns with standpoint theory, which focuses on the lived experiences of marginalised groups and claim that knowledge is socially situated. While pairing intersectionality and standpoint theory helped in mainstreaming the intersectional approach, its focus on strong reflexivity likely led to the formation of centre-categorical approaches (Geerts & van der Tuin 2013, p. 173). This is problematic because it relies on hierarchies of marginalised groups, as problematised above.

The inter-categorical, or categorical, approach advocates strategic use of categories to explicate relationships of inequality between already constituted social groups (McCall 2005, p. 1784-1785). Since such an approach makes post-positivist assumptions by viewing categories as fixed entities, problematic outcomes can be additive approaches which can lead to assumptions actually sought to oppose through relying on quantitative methodology and mathematical and geometric metaphors to offer an ordered and clear-cut description of intersectionality (Martinez *et al.,* 2014, p. 455, Mehrotra 2010, p. 420-421). Such approaches to intersectionality have been criticised as insufficient and essentialising (e.g., Bowleg, 2008; Hancock, 2007; Yuval-Davis, 2006).

For the purpose of this study, I draw on a critical realist understanding of categories as abstractions (Martinez *et al.,* 2014, p. 458). Viewing categories as abstraction counteracts the homogenising effect of the purely categorical approach and countervails the effect of anti-categorical approaches which claim that social categories are only fictitious (ibid.). Abstractions of categories serve to acknowledge the real social, political, cultural, and economic implications of the analysed context by accounting for the social meaning attached to each abstraction and interpret the structural positions that follow (ibid.). Martinez *et al.* pair their approach of "categories as abstractions" with Roy Bhaskar's notion of 'concrete universality,' which relates abstract universal categories such as 'woman' as being mediated by abstracted intersecting factors like 'race,' sexuality, class, ability, geopolitical context, and so on (ibid.). This way of accounting for the complexity of difference and belonging emphasises the particularity and uniqueness of each set of social relations and concurs with rationales proposed by intersectionality theory. Not only does such an abstraction mitigate human centrality, it also better accounts for mechanisms of structure and agency by giving room to unexplored but politically and socially relevant mechanisms. Having clarified and motivated the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of this study, the following part of the chapter presents applied methods and the two sets of material.

4.3 Material and Methods

This part provides a discussion of selected methods and material of this study. The first section describes the applied methods of inference that are formulated from the above presented methodological frame. The second section then discusses the selection of online material, followed by a discussion on the conducted semi-structured interviews. Finally, the limitations of this study are addressed.

4.3.1. Methods of inference

Using intersectionality as overall theory to relate various types of domination on a structural-theoretical level, the critical realist methodology of this study offers methods of inference which are used to systematically analyse the collected material. The explanatory logics of abductive and retroductive inference allow to move between theory and data to discover and analyse deeper levels of understanding (Edwards *et al.,* 2014, p. 17-19).

Abduction, also referred to as 'Inference to the Best Explanation,' wages between various and possibly competing explanations to select one that best explains the issue at question (Halperin & Heath 2012, p. 425). Abductive inference is used on the empirical level to re-describe the observable, such as the input provided in an interview, in an abstracted and more general manner to produce the most plausible explanation (Edwards *et al.* 2014: 17).

Retroduction, on the other hand, is used to reason backwards by asking what the world or broader context of the studied issue must be like to establish observed structures or mechanisms (ibid.). This allows to identify patterns throughout the process of research to then pose questions such as 'what if?' to identify further hidden causal mechanisms (ibid.).

Abduction and retroduction are useful tools for this study because they allow to explain and refute underlying mechanisms presented to rationalise and de-politicise the exploitation of farmed bovines. The approaches moreover allow for theoretical generalisations, instead of generalising about populations (Edwards *et al.,* 2014, p. 18). Theoretical generalisations about the oppression of farmed bovines and its viability for intersectional justice-oriented research can be applied in various contexts of time and place and invites novel and unanticipated or previously rejected views about reality. With these methods of inference in mind, the analysis is led by the following inferential questions:

- How are bovines constructed and described in the Swedish dairy industry?
- What wording is used to describe bovines, and how are these descriptions conceptualised by binaries and social categories of difference?
- What symbolism is used to describe and justify the farming of cows?

- How is the oppression of cows manifested in practice?
- What wording is used to describe the material practice of dairy farming and in what ways do these operationalise bovines exploitation?
- In what ways does the exploitation of cows intersect with other types of oppression that can be identified in the wider context of the dairy industry?
- On what grounds does the argument of Swedish added value of dairy production intersect with other dominant belief systems?
- How must the broader context of control be like to frame the oppression of farmed bovines as normal and cultural significant practice?

The above posed questions are used to lead and structure the analysis. The set of questions should be understood as related. They aid in answering the main research question by addressing the various problems inherent to the encompassing subject of oppressing other animals as resources to fulfil economic interests. The material used in this study consist of interview notes and transcripts and a set of selected online sources. Both sets of material are presented in the following two sections.

4.3.2. Online Material

The online material used in this study includes content from organisational webpages, reports, and video material of a selection of stakeholders in the Swedish dairy sector. Due to the studies' focus on the depiction and framing of dairy farming, production methods, and bovines as dairy producers, the available online material provided a well-founded insight into the organisation's stands on these issues. Besides focusing on LRF Dairy Sweden, the primary lobby organisation of the Swedish dairy industry, material from Arla, Skånemejerier, and Skånesemin are included. Arla Foods is a global dairy cooperation owned by nearly 13,500 dairy farmers in seven European countries (Arla, 2016b).[4] Arla is the largest dairy producer in Sweden, while the Skånemejerier dairy predominates in Skåne, with approximately 400 delivering farmers (Skånemejerier.se, 2016a).

Focusing on these two major dairies and the overarching representative LRF Dairy Sweden, I decided to include one further organisation that is not marketing dairy to the public but focuses primarily on dairy producers. Skånesemin is a service provider for dairy and meat producers in Skåne, offering services related to breeding, animal health care, and business counselling (Skånesemin.se, 2016a). Skånesemin was selected in order to see how services facilitating the material practice of dairy farming are described and how implicit conceptions about bovines relate to wider dominant belief systems.

4.3.3. Semi-structured interviews

The aim of conducting interviews was to learn about the practice of dairy farming and to see how cows are commonly depicted in the industry. Semi-structured

[4] Arla's dairy farmers are based in Sweden, Denmark, United Kingdom, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and the Netherlands (Arla, 2016)

interviews are selected as tool to obtain descriptions of the interviewee's perspectives on the phenomena, as they allow "obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to the meaning of the described phenomena" (Kvale 2008, p. 7-8).

In total, nine interviews were conducted, seven with dairy farmers, and two with staff members of LRF Dairy Sweden, the largest representative of Sweden's dairy industry (LRF 2016). Since this study was inspired by my academic internship, which focused on the oppression of bovines in the Swedish dairy industry, I conducted two of the here analysed interviews with dairy farmers together with my internship supervisor.[5] All other interviews have been conducted by myself. The seven interviews with dairy farmers were conducted at the respective farms, which were for practical reasons all located in the county of Skåne. The two interviews with staff members of LRF Dairy Sweden were conducted over the phone, as their office is based in Stockholm.

Asking farmers about their perspective on the milk crisis and their interactions with and conceptions of the cows offers insight into the lived experience of central actors in the dairy industry and helps to understand which meaning they give to the daily interaction with the cows. With the theoretical and normative focus of this study standing in opposition to the farming of other animals, I planned and conducted the interviews in a way that allowed having constructive conversations about dairy farming. This was in order to avoid creating an agonistic interview, as my goal was not to confront and deliberately provoke conflict (Kvale 2002, p. 14). Instead of assessing or judging the opinions of my informants, I showed interest in their perspectives as my goal was to establish a ground for a conversation in which both sides feel comfortable expressing their views, which I did if asked by the informants.

The selection of respondents occurred in different methods. During the academic internship, we relied on contacts Linné had from previous studies on the topic of annual pasture releases of dairy cows. During my individual work for this study, Linné initially functioned as gatekeeper to some of the conducted

[5] In my academic internship, I assisted Tobias Linné from the Department of Media and Communication at Lund University. The research project problematised the exploitation of bovines from a CAS perspective and critically scrutinised rhetorics and representations of animal welfarism in the Swedish dairy industry. My tasks were to conduct an extensive literature review and to assist with the conduction of qualitative interviews.

interviews. Most informants were found through web searches, and include farmers who either have personal or organisational websites, have been presented in the media, or who are listed on the dairies' websites. Further on in the interviewing process, I received contact details for further possible informants from one interviewee, which led to one conducted interview. Most of the interviewed farmers delivered their milk to Skånemejerier, only one farm delivered to the Arla dairy, which reflects the greater representation of Skånemejerier in Skåne.

The interviews were prepared by establishing interview guides covering possible themes and questions for each interview (Kvale 2008, p. 51). One template was created for interviews with dairy farmers, and one for the interviews with LRF personnel. The sequence of themes in the interview guides thematically respond to the research problem, and, together with the prepared questions, serve to structure the interview. Themes covered topics such as the farmer's general work situation, the Swedish milk crisis, the relation between farmers and cows, and wider topics of animal welfare and the politics of dairy farming. The questions were organised under the respective themes so as to allow switching between topics according to the course of the interview to allow for open conversation flow.

Before starting the actual interview, all informants were provided with a description of the research project and an informed consent form to protect their anonymity and to further explain the context and procedure of the interview. If interview were conducted on the phone, the consent form was sent to the informant prior to the scheduled time and was orally agreed upon at the beginning of the interview. I selected only parts of the transcribed interviews for citation that enabled to show the informants account without revealing their identity. All interviews were conducted and transcribed in Swedish. Used citations are translated by myself, and the original text is provided in footnotes. The interviews ranged from 30 minutes for the phone interviews and 45 to 90 minutes for interviews with farmers.

4.3.4. Limitations

The design and scope of this study results in a set of limitations, which are addressed in this section. Since the aim of this study to emphasise the intersectionality of domination across human-animal boundaries is a broad issue, I decided to narrow the research problem down to discuss the topic of Swedish dairy production and related beliefs about human-animal relations to give an illustrative example. Framing the topic around the issue of the Swedish milk crisis allowed me to connect the theoretical focus of this study to a current topic of public interest and debate.

The informed consent form included a description of the wider focus of study as problematising the Swedish milk crisis and the political economy of dairy farming and its effect on human-animal relations from the interdisciplinary perspective of Political Science, CAS, Media and Communication Studies, and Gender Studies. The full level of criticism to the farming of other animals was not spelled out in the description of the study, in order to avoid antagonising the interviewees, and interview questions were formulated carefully and in a more human-oriented way. Framing the conversations in this explorative and less unobtrusive way allowed for constructive and valuable conversations about the topic. As a result, most interviews did not lead to a critical discussion of dairy farming per se and were on a more general and practice-oriented level. Some interviewees discussed the topic from various perspectives and were aware of the ethically motivated criticism toward animal agriculture, in which cases conversation took place respectfully.

Possible objection against the direction of this study from the side of respondents is possibly reflected in the difficulty of finding individuals and organisations willing to be interviewed. While the response level to initial contacting was low, the interviews eventually conducted with dairy farmers allowed for a satisfactory level of saturation and fulfilled the purpose of their relevance to this study. Since I attempted to conduct a larger number of interviews with personnel of several dairy-related organisations, I decided to expand the pool of material to include online sources. LRF Dairy Sweden was the only organisation agreeing to be interviewed. Other contacted organisations did either

not respond to repeated contacting or claimed to be outside of reference. However, since all contacted organisations have a strong internet presence, a sufficient amount of material could be generated through online sources, in which objectives, services, and campaigns are presented to support dairy farming and consumption.

Conducting the interviews in Swedish and including Swedish online sources allowed for increased access to informants and material. It is however important to note that while I hold a good conversational level of Swedish, it is not my first language.

5. Analysis

This analytical chapter is organised in two debates. The first uses empirical examples from Swedish dairy farming to illustrate how farmed bovines are constructed as Other. Problematising the construction of the cow as resource for human food production shows that it is constituted by counterbalancing bovine subjectivity and agency with notions of human control and privilege. The second debate builds onto the first by illustrating how the identified oppressive classifications of the bovine Other affect how bovines are treated in practice. Highlighting these theoretical and practical manifestations of bovine's oppression are then contrasted with the problematised underlying logic of animal welfarism and the argument of Swedish added value in dairy production. Relating the oppression of farmed bovines to the problem representation of the Swedish milk crisis situates the issue in the wider structures of dominations also affecting human Others, as the analysed example constitutes a driving force in the cultivation of cultural and economically motivated ideologies and power structures.

5.1 The Construction of the bovine Other

In order to emphasise interspecies intersectionality of dominations, similarities of exclusion have to be identified. This first part of the analysis is organised into three sections, whereas the first discusses the categorisation and valorisation of bovines used in dairy farming. This presentation of the cow is then contextualised in the second section by showing that the implicit hierarchisation is established and motivated by intersectional in-group differences of farmed bovines, leading to

hierarchical and conflicting human-bovine relations of claiming to recognise Others while fundamentally oppressing them. The final section relates the empirical findings of interspecies relations to wider theoretical intersectional processes of exclusion to illustrate how dairy farming is a case of fostering human privilege over other animals by diminishing their agency and subjectivity.

5.1.1 "Who counts?" — Categorisation of social difference

Asking dairy farmers to describe their daily work with the cows has provided insight into how they construct their relations to the cows by unfolding common ways of categorising and classifying bovines.

Referred to as "cow identity" in Arla's quality report Arlagården (2016c, p. 14), bovines bear various changing labels throughout their life which are used to identify their current place and role in production. Outlining these constructions of cow's "identity" shows how labels are used to mark the various stages of defining their utilisation while being alive, until they receive their last label destining them to be turned into "meat".

At birth, the biological sex of a calf determines how they will be used. If a calf is female (kvigkalv), she will likely be kept at the farm to be raised for dairy production. If a calf is a male "bull calf" (tjurkalv) however, he will be sold off as surplus product at about eight weeks of age to be raised at a "meat farm" to be killed for his flesh. This shows how the difference of biological sex is used as distinguisher to construct economic use value. To raise the calfs, some farmers use so-called "foster cows" (amkor) who are kept together with several calfs to feed them for up to three months. Other farmers instead keep the calfs in groups or separately in boxes and bucket-feed them either fresh milk or a milk powder replacement.

Growing up, a female bovine is called "heifer" (kviga) and is supposed to grow and develop physical features deemed appropriate for several pregnancies and prolonged periods of lactation. "Heifers" are also referred to as the "recruitment" (rekrytering) of the farm and will be impregnated at around 15 months of age (Arla, 2016d, interviews). If their body does not develop to desired standards or the first pregnancy, delivery, or offspring is not perceived as effective or useful enough, she will be sold off to the slaughter house and killed as soon as

her lactation declines. This illustrates how bodily features and abilities are used as distinguishers to construct certain bovines as profitable means for dairy production and consumption. Some of the farmers I interviewed claimed to cross-breed the animals using a “milk-breed” and a “meat-breed” to produce bovines with features deemed useful and profitable for so-called “surplus animals”.

The ways bovines are selected to either directly be turned into meat or to first be used for the production of more calfs and milk is motivated by various social differences, which are identified and categorised by the farmers and dairy industry. Whenever asking the respondents how many animals they have on the farm, they first only referred to those categorised as “dairy cows” (mjölkko). A female bovine is not considered a “cow” or “dairy cow” before she produces milk, for which she needs to give birth (Arla, 2016d, interviews). Some of the interviewed farmers started counting her age only from that point onwards, so that when asked about a cow’s age, they referred to her “time of use” first, and then adding the time prior to that. This underlines the centrality of milking as the central purpose of the practice. Everything that happens before, aside, or after the process of taking her milk is portrayed as secondary or side production.

As soon as the pre-production phase of birth is completed and the calf is removed from their mother, she will be milked at least twice daily for a duration of about ten months, during which she will again be forcibly impregnated, which I discuss later. A cow is pregnant for nine months, which means that she is made pregnant again shortly after giving birth. About two months before the birth of her next calf, she is milked infrequently only to release pressure in her udder, under which period she is called a “dry cow” (sinko). Cows are “dried off” to “rest” and avoid putting too much strain on their pregnant bodies which could potentially interfere with the upcoming birth (interview 1, 2, 5). The exploitation of a “dairy cow” thus emerges through selecting certain features that are controlled by humans to accumulate profit.

Several interviewed farmers claimed that dairy cows “function” best after their third calf, which is why farmers claim to strive keeping them as healthy as possible to get them over the age of then around five (interviews). Reasons for not making it past this still young age were claimed to be due to “unsuitable” physique or health issues of the cow (ibid.). Since domesticated cows are highly

overbred, live in detrimental conditions and are made to produce up to sixty litres of milk a day, it is not surprising that their health deteriorates. As soon as their health or production declines too much, they are taken out of production and are then referred to as "cull cow" (slakteko) to be killed at the slaughterhouse. This procedure of systematically impregnating and exploiting cows shows that breeding and using cows as food resources is gendered and natured. The allocation of specific categorised terms constructing "cow's identity" in dairy production serves to de-individualise and objectify exploited individuals by viewing them only in terms of the constructed groups' identity, suggesting that all share the same set of characteristics (Joy 2010, p. 119). To write off the individuality of subjects, the relation at play is constructed as "us versus them" by subordinating bovines through referring to their species as legitimate denominator excusing their exploitation. In addition to taking cows' species difference as baseline justification to be in service of humans, the everyday human-animal relation of farmer and cows is shaped by processes of valorising further social differences to categorise farmed cows as either "good" or "bad". Cows are chosen to fulfil natured characteristics of good milk and meat "producers" and with gendered characteristics of fulfilling feminine stereotypes and temperaments of prosperous, selfless and passive mothers (Cudworth 2008, p. 39), as shown in the following section.

5.1.2 Social differences as marker of profitability

When asking interviewees about their relation to the cows some looked perplexed, while others did not seem to think of it as an odd question at all or described the issue without being asked by framing it as integral part of their job. Interestingly, most framed their response in ways describing different characters of the cows to differentiate how that affects the daily work of the farmer or whether a cow "functions well". If the relationship was either good or bad was thus dependant on the cows' behaviour and whether or not she complied well to the terms set by the farmer, as well as how her body functions biologically. To give one clear example:

> "[…] I also like if the cow milks a lot so that it…well…it links up after all, with the job, that when a cow that milks a lot, or a cow that milks badly or a cow that calves poorly or has bad feet [...] then it is better to slaughter her. Well, if we wouldn't have done that than one would have been in conflict

> with it all, but dairy cows are standing for 44-45% of all beef, so it's...so I do not see it as something terrible. […] And whether you like her or not…cows are very individual. […] They have personalities, that's how it is. So even if one is…or if there is one that you like a lot...so if you know she works fine to inseminate and such...then you know that she will calve a fourth time. And it's much more fun with those cows. Because with those you have a relationship in a completely different way so, yes." (interview 1; my translation)[6]

As can be seen in this account of a farmer, the cow he is referring to here is described in a generalised manner and is effectively removed from the production process. Doing so emphasises the objectives and steps of production in a rational way, and desensitises us in the superior position from the fact that farmed cows are treated like objects (Joy 2010, p. 124). The process of categorising farmed cows as de-individualised objects is thus made possible by organising their "usefulness" into binaries (Joy 2010, p. 122).

As bovine's character and identity seemed to be constructed as either good/ useful or bad/useless for dairy production, I asked farmers to describe the "best cow to work with", if it happens that cows refuse to comply with directives, and if they think that the cows they interact with have different personalities. All respondents described cows as having different personalities and tempers, which was said to show through either being shy and avoiding or by coming closer to initiate contact with the farmers, which was often described as "cuddly" (interviews).

Criteria for a "good cow" that were given by the informants included that they should be tame, curious, calm, and cooperative. This reflects connotations of femininity (e.g. Adams, 1993; Cudworth, 2008; Otomo, 2015), which are used to frame useful, i.e. profitable, prerequisites symbolising a "good cow". A further criteria that was emphasised by several farmers was that cows should "have a good udder", which should be of the right size, "not too saggy", and at the right place, and many stated that they identify and recognise individual cows by their udder (interviews). This illustrates the materialisation of cow's bodies as means of

[6] "[…] Jag gillar också när kon mjölka mycket så att den...ja...det hänger ju ihop detta, med jobbet, att när en ko som mjölka mycket, eller en ko som mjölka dålig eller en ko som kalvar dålig eller har för dåliga fötter […] då är det bättre att man slaktar henne. Alltså hade vi inte gjort det så hade man ju varit i konflikt med allting, men mjölkkorna står ju för 44-45% av allt nötkött, så det är ju...så jag ser inte det som någonting hemskt. […] Och om man tycker om henne eller inte...korna är väldigt individuellt. […] Dem har personligheter, det är ju så. Så att även om en är...eller om det är en som man gilla mycket...så om man vet att hon funkar bra att semineras och så…då vet man att hon kommer kalvar en fjärde gång. Och det är mycket roligare med dem här korna. För att dem har man en relation till på ett helt annat sätt så, ja." (interview 1)

production, leading to the cow slowly being taken out of the production process in a way that she is not longer the agent of production but instead "a static object through which the milk passes — or even less, as simply a risk factor for profit margins" (Otomo 2015, p. 223). Another criterion for a "good cow to work with", which some respondents then referred to as "functioning cow" (fungerade ko) or "sustainable cow" (hållbar ko) was that her milk yields are high, she gets pregnant easily, and that she has a good overall physique with strong hoofs and legs so that she "lasts long" (ibid.).

A "bad cow" on the other hand was described as one that does not function properly because she is "stupid" and "stubborn", "does not react to signals", kicks, or is "mean" to humans or other cows (interview 1, 2, 3, 5). Examining how farmed cows are conceptualised and described illustrates how "from conception until death, the lives of these animals are shaped by their location as potential food" (Cudworth 2008, p. 33). While such providence is rather straightforward in animals farmed for their flesh, female bovines used in the dairy industry are additionally exploited throughout their lifetime, commodifying the biological process of reproducing life, which is then presented as "natural" to normalise the aspect of human control. Foregrounding the purpose of food production seeks to normalise the farming of other animals and frames them as objects to be acted upon.

Measures of excluding and exploiting farmed bovines follow similar logics as those facilitating the Othering of marginalised human groups by perpetuating gendered, sexist, and ableist ideas to establish hierarchies. The empirical material shows that farmed cows are hierarchically ordered in accordance to social differences valorising their age, sex, perceived personality and behaviour, and how well their bodies serve farming production goals. While economic use value builds on the objectification of farmed cows, the farmers interacting with them on a daily basis recognise them as individuals with their own personality, although presenting the cows' subject-hood through the overall speciesist framework favouring production. This exemplifies our inconsistent attitudes and behaviours towards other animals, which is so entrenched and normalised that it is left unquestioned (Joy, 2010). The following example illustrates how difficult it can be to describe this inconsistent and contradicting relation of seeing other animals

as individuals but subjugating them as lesser, objectified beings. Doing so undermines the agency of other animals, which is discussed in the following section.

> J: How would you describe the relationship you have to the cows? You told me that you recognise them…
> G: Well…relation…well it is…the difference…well it is almost like a human. There are some cows that come close and eh…not talk…but they come close and cuddle and […] then there are some that go away. They are individuals.
> J: Do you think they have different personalities?
> G: Yes, different temper and all, you know. […]
> J: Yes…You said they sometimes are like humans. Do you perceive them as your colleagues?
> G: I, mh…it is like one has 150 employees (laughs). (interview 3; my translation)[7]

5.1.3 Conflictive relations: (Non)human agency and privilege

Intersectionality is used as theoretical tool to make sense of how social differences shape processes of exclusion and identification. The above presented categories present farmed bovines with the shared denominator of being "a food animal", which serves to rule out possibilities of inclusion or solidarity as they are constructed as fundamentally different from us. The highlighted difference of species is thus used to legitimise the subordination and objectification of other animals. A key element of this process of exclusion is to diminish the Others agency to then construct one's own agency and subjectivity as overriding. Putting ourselves into the superior position reinforces logics of power and domination through normalising value-dualistic structures legitimising that humans have the privilege to execute their power over nonhumans (Nibert, 2002; Warren, 2000).

Hribal states that "agency refers to the minorities' ability to influence their own lives — i.e. the ability of the cow to influence and guide her own life" (2007, p. 102). As argued in the next section, common structures imposed by robotic milking technologies and automated stable systems are designed to regulate the level of agency nonhuman animals are able to exert when farmed in the dairy

[7] J: Hur skulle du beskriva relationen du har till korna? Du har ju berättat att du känna igen dem...
G: Ja...relation....alltså det är...skillnad...alltså det är ungefär som en människa. Det är en del kor som kommer fram och äh...pratar ja, inte....men de kommer fram och kela och...och sedan en del som går undan. De är ju individer.
J: Tycket du att de har olika personligheter?
G: Ja, olika lynne och allting vet du.
J: Ja…du sa att de är som människor ibland...tycker du att de är som dina arbetskollegor?
G: Jag, mhh...det är ju som att man ha 150 stycken anställda (skrattar). (interview 3)

industry. Hribal distinguishes between two perspectives of viewing subordinate groups; from above, or from below (2007). Cows are thus viewed from above, because they are not believed to be in possession of independent agency, or have collective rights or value outside of the frames that define them as serviceable to humans (Hribal 2007, p. 101). This is because:

> "The animals are not seen as agents. They are not active, as labourers, prisoners, or resistors. Rather, the animals are presented as static characters that have, over time, been used, displayed, and abused by humans. They emerge as objects — empty of any real substance" (Hribal 2007, p. 102).

Labourers, prisoners, and resistors are agents situated in social practices and structures in which they participate or which is imposed upon them. Farmed bovines are not described as "prisoners" or "resistors" because doing so would inadvertently admit that they are active beings who are subjugated and captivated in a human-controlled system. This does not mean that cows do not resist. As mentioned in the section above, common depictions of "bad cows" are used to refer to those who kick, refuse to follow directives, or are otherwise obstructing the farmers idea of how a cow is supposed to behave. Since cows agency to act against structures and practices imposed on them are seen as obstacle to a smooth workflow, as potential danger to humans, and as impeding factor to profit margins (interviews 1, 2, 3), their acts of resistance may have dire consequences:

> "But we have a cow that is small, and besides...she does not function in the robot, as she moves constantly back and forth. And then he [the robot] cannot find the teats. Also, she kicks all the time. So she must be taken manually. So I have to go there and hang on [the milking machine]. [...] But she will not stay [here]. That cow goes to slaughter after all. One or another of those you can have but you do not want to have too many because after all, the entire system is based on functionality." (interview 2; my translation)[8]

The question is therefore not *if* cows have agency. Their observable behaviour shows that they do, as illustrated in the example above, where a cow uses her smaller body size to try to avoid being milked. Robotic milking machines are built as cage enclosing the cows' body after they are lured into it with concentrated

[8] "Men vi har någon ko som är liten, och dessutom … hon fungera inte i roboten, alltså hon rör sig hela tiden fram och tillbaka. Och då hitta han [roboten] ju inte spenarna. Dessutom så sparkar hon hela tiden. Så att henne får man ta manuellt. Så får jag gå dit och hänga på [mjölkmaskinen]. […] Men hon kommer ju inte blir kvar. Den går till slakt den kon ju. En annan son kan man ju ha men man vill ju inte ha för många för hela systemet bygger ju på att det ska fungera." (interview 2)

feed. Not providing much space to move, cows usually have no choice to stand still so that the machine can clean the teats and then attach the milking cups.

If cows would not have the ability to influence their lives and interact with their environment, the animal industrial complex would not have to design confining stables and cages or subject them to practices such as dehorning, forced impregnation, and separation from their offspring. If farmed animals would really be the happy servants we like to see them as, those methods of coercion and abuse would not be necessary. However, it is important that the agency of farmed animals is not only equated with resistance because it risks anthropomorphising other animals and withholds that they are not only able to block and resist human control, but also to allow and cooperate (Pearson, 2015). Compliance to oppressing conditions still depends on the oppressed to follow orders, even though these acts of compliance are enforced or highly controlled.

My point is that the level of control is so extensive, invasive and incapacitating that farmed animals have not much choice to behave in ways they would if they were not subjugated to serve as embodiments of living resources. Emphasis is thus not put on the social system framing bovines as resources, but on the already taken for granted belief that cows exist to be farmed (Adams 1997, p. 35). Cows can then be constructed as having *some* degree of subjectivity or agency, although of a lesser quality than that of humans, again reinforcing human superiority while simultaneously expressing some form of regard for the animals' subjective experience. An example of this "logic" can be seen when implying some form of agency to farmed bovines when they are depicted as "labourers".

Depicting cows as "dairy workers" may seek to frame them as active participants or to suggest that their "contribution" to the industry is somehow recognised (Porcher & Schmitt, 2012). I argue that doing so seeks to legitimise their exploitation. Calling to mind the previously discussed example of anthropomorphic advertising of Arla's *Bregottfabriken* illustrates how cows are described as similar to us to overshadow and naturalise that they are used because they are a different species. "Bregott" being the name of the advertised spread, and "fabriken" the Swedish word for "factory", cows are depicted as shift workers checking in and out their wide green pastures suggesting that their "job" is to be outside to eat grass and produce milk for human consumption by simultaneously

keeping Sweden's landscape open (YouTube, 2016a). Those advertisements are presented on television and social media all year around, showing cows on summer pastures and depicting them with feminised stereotypes. One such example is a photograph of a group of cows standing heads together in a circle with the title "girl's talk at Bregottfabriken" and hashtags such as "girls' dinner", "girl power", "girls have the most fun", "bull free" and "cow gossip" (Instagram, 2016). Such androcentric and speciesist marketing reinforces notions about cows as "Other", because depicting them with human traits serves to reinforce that they are different from us, further legitimising their subordination to human control (Stevens et al., 2013).

While some believe that describing farmed bovines as "labourers" is somehow acknowledging them (Porcher & Schmitt, 2012), it is important to emphasise that doing so is de-politicising the fact that farmed bovines are forced to perform what we then frame as reproductive labour done for humans to accumulate profit. Porcher and Schmitt (2012) rightly argue that cows are agents who have subjective investment in their life, but I disagree that calling farmed cows "workers" is doing them any service. The "subjective investment" Porcher and Schmitt observed in cow's behaviour shows how cows use their agency to influence interactions with other cows, the farmer, and the milking robot in various ways (2012). While intending to frame farmed bovines as subjects who need to be recognise bovines as active participants in dairy farming, their conclusion is not critical of cows subjugation to human rule as such and instead depicts cows' agency through an anthropomorphic and welfarist lens.

Describing the total exploitation of cows lives, bodies, and reproductive abilities as their "work" ignores that their sphere of production and reproduction is one and the same (Adams, 1997: 31; Noske 1989, p. 17). They cannot decide not to "work", as their oppression is predetermined by them being defined and treated as means of production. Depictions of cows as "workers" therefore does the opposite of recognising them and instead reinforces the idea that human subjectivity is of some higher order and therefore to be privileged over conceptions of lesser subjectivity of farmed cows.

A more critical account is presented in Holloway's research on the co-production of farmed bovines' subjectivities and the development of automatic

milking technology, showing that cow's objectification is framed through granting them some degree of subjectivity (2007). Claiming that cows have *some* degree of subjectivity still implies that they are not full subjects, which makes their use as units of production in the food industry more justifiable. At the same time, framing cows as holding some degree of subjectivity also implies that we humans subordinating the cows can legitimately do so because we believe to have a higher degree of subjectivity. Asking the inferential question of 'what if' (we would not grant them some degree of subjectivity) points to another motivating factor for doing so, because if we would describe cows as purely inanimate objects, we would need to lie to ourselves even more to cognitively disassociate from recognising other animals' feelings and their own interest in life. Regardless of some measurable knowledge of proof of other animals' subjectivity, granting them some inferior form of subjectivity shows that taking it away completely would be inconsistent, because we are actually well aware of their subject-hood, otherwise we would not be able to form mutual bonds and relations. Doing so moreover allows to connect welfarist ideology to farming practices, which reinforces species difference and human superiority even more as it does not require us to question our relation to other animals to a degree that would reduce human privilege.

What some may perceive as provocation when highlighting that cows are oppressed and exploited when used as resources for food can be examined with the previously discussed notion of 'Oppression Olympics' (Hancock, 2011). The uneasiness of having to ascribe victimhood to a group and therewith visualising their domination as the result of one's superiority and privilege reveals our position as oppressors, and requires us to confront and question defence mechanisms that otherwise allow ourselves to resist responsibility (Joy, 2010). When choosing not to question these power mechanisms to engage in this hierarchisation of suffering and oppression, we defy our own agency (Hancock 2011, p. 4, 11). The implicit claim is that it is *natural* for humans to do so (Joy, 2010), thus de-politicising that using other animals as food is a culturally and politically motivated practice which we chose to nurture human privilege and to generate profit. Writing the oppression of nonhumans off as according to the "rules of nature" are part and parcel of the same problem of viewing ourselves as

most central and important species following and administering these "logics of power" (Nibert 2003, p. 20). Holding on to such beliefs hinders us in questioning how we construct our identity and social practice as fundamentally based on the oppression of Others.

So far, I have established that the categorisation of farmed bovines reflects anthropocentric, speciesist and sexist bias are de-politicising the exploitation of cows' reproductive abilities. Discussing these organising mechanisms of dairy farming confirms Adams' claim of human privilege as the direct consequence of the Others oppression (1993, p. 210-211). The utilisation of bovine's bodies cannot happen without denying their full subjectivity and agency to live and exist for their own sake. Moving from this theoretical explanation of subjugating farmed bovines to human rule, the next part discusses how such subordination is carried out in practice.

5.2 Material practice and ideologies of control in Swedish dairy farming

As introduced earlier, the milk crisis in Sweden is not only said to exist because of low milk prices, overproduction, or shifting demand. The long-term crisis, is said to be caused by Swedish added value of dairy farming resulting in higher costs of production than in other European countries (Arla, 2016e; Jordbruksverket, 2016a). This second debate of the analytical chapter is again organised into three sections. The first discusses how cow's oppression is manifested in practice. Examining the farmer's description of their daily work and the farming systems they have chosen to work with provides empirical examples illustrating what has been explored and theorised in previous literature on the oppression of farmed animals in the animal industrial complex (e.g., Noske, 1997; Twine, 2012). The second section problematises the underlying logic of welfarist ideology. After that, the issue is related to the argument of Swedish added value of dairy production in order to show how this welfarist ideology relates to the intersectionality of dominations across the human-animal divide in general and the example of Swedish dairy farming in particular.

5.2.1 Methods of control in Swedish dairy farming

Besides depicting farmed bovines as some nonhuman working class animal, another crucial tactic of the dairy industry is to emphasise all accounts that can be

understood as somewhat in favour of the cows' wellbeing, which are then phrased as a privilege of the cows in order to encourage beliefs in the value of Swedish dairy production. Suggesting that cows are somehow privileged by being able to go outside, for example, as compared to other farmed animals in neighbouring countries, distorts the reality of industrial farming practices and suggests that Swedish farming practices are superior and more "ethical", while leaving oppressive human-animal relations unchallenged. In this section, commonly advertised pictures of cows grazing the fields are contextualised with some of the details on farming practices that are not highlighted by the dairy industry.

Swedish animal welfare regulations require that all bovines are outside during the summer. The Swedish Board of Agriculture sets the time frame in which pasture release shall take place between May and October and sets different rules to the minimum amount of time bovines are to be held outside, ranging from two to four months yearly depending on different geographical areas (Jordbruksverket, 2008b). Calfs under six months do not have to be provided with outside space, and special rules also apply for "dairy cows" as they are kept closer to the stable to be milked regularly, which is why it is instructed that they are only to be kept outside for at least six hours daily during the above mentioned timeframes (ibid.). These rules have recently been opposed by different actors of the dairy industry, calling to decrease the minimum amount of required pasture time to 60 days for the entire country (Jordbruksverket, 2016c). While it is apparent that bovines farmed in Swedish dairy production already spend most of the year inside, the Swedish Board of Agriculture now suggested to reformulate pasture regulations suggesting to keep the current amount of days but to grant dairy farmers with more flexibility and less administrative requirements (Jordbruksverket, 2016c), making it nearly impossible to control if regulations are followed.

Keeping cows inside is of interest to the dairy industry because it increases profitability. The highly regulated environment of the stable functions to govern and monitor the cows' behaviour and "performance" (Holloway 2007, p. 1046). In Sweden, 32% of all farmed cows are tied up, allowing them only to stand up or lie down (Djurensrätt, 2016). To phase the tethered system out, all newly built barns have to keep cows in a loose walking system, but older operations using the tethered system are allowed to continue the practice until 2017 (Jordbruksverket,

2016f). The abrogation of the system can be used by the industry to argue that concern for animal welfare was a decisive factor in this development, although the intensification and mechanisation of keeping cows in walking stables allow to increase profitability and more convenient working methods for the farmer.

One interviewed farmer who has experience with both tied and walking systems claimed that terminating the tied system is advantageous inasmuch as it is a very time-consuming and physically intense working method, thus leading to lower profitability than in a walking stable (interview 1). Besides those seemingly pivotal factors, he was keen to emphasise that being tethered does not mean the cows are worse off, as they "like to be pampered" and that the increased amount of time one has to spend on shaving their hair to keep the cows clean is making them calm and used to the presence of humans, as opposed to "wilder" cows in walking stables (ibid.) He concluded that:

> Yes, if you like animals then it is nice with tethered cows. That part. But then you cannot have too many animals. [...] But one feels good doing it… spiritually, that is. Because it's cosy. If you like animals, then it is very cosy. And everyone says that! That's how it is. (interview 1; my translation)[9]

This example illustrates how total control over the Other is framed as something positive through relying on the human dimension and experience of the described human-animal relationship. The farmer's description of the positive aspects of the tethered system is not about the cows or the fact that they cannot exercise their most basic behaviours when tied up. The used symbolism of "being pampered" is describing the exaggerated opposite of being constraint to such extend that the cows have now alternative than to lie in their own dirt, necessitating the increased "care work" of the farmer. This example shows how we can choose to believe that our treatment of Others is unproblematic or even positive, a vital defence mechanism to keep oppressive structures at play (Joy 2010, p. 57). While the industry can use welfarist claims to stress that the tethered stable system is phased out to increase the wellbeing of farmed bovines, examining how modern walking stables are optimising production indicates that the decision is led by profit.

[9] H: Ja om man tycker om djur alltså så är det trevligt med uppbundna kor. Den biten. Men då kan man inte ha för många djur. […] Men man mår bra av det...alltså själsligt. För att det är mysigt. Om man gilla djur, då är det jätte mysigt. Och det säga alla! Så är det. (interview 1)

Walking stables using automatic milking technology are designed to optimise the level of production for each individual cow. All cows wear a necklace with a transponder, which calculates their activity patterns to detect the cow's oestrus (interviews 3, 5, 6). This information is then sent to the computer system, which holds all relevant information for each cow to calculate the required amount of feed, to keep track of milk yields, and to trigger an alarm if individual cows do not return to the milking robot in the time frame allocated to her (ibid.). Milking robots are presented as advantageous for both farmers and cow herds as the machine works independently, sparing farmers much time and physical work, and is said to provide cows with individual freedom by allowing them to decide when to be milked or when to eat, rest, or drink (Holloway 2007, interviews 2, 3, 5, 6, 8). In the stable, cows are led through a specially designed gated system, separating the barn into different areas designated to respond to specific needs of the cows. In order to get to the area to eat and lie down, for instance, they first have to go through a waiting area that leads to one or several milking robots (interviews 2, 3, 5, 6, 8). The cows are therewith led through the barn in a way that integrates the milking process into a cow's daily rhythm according to her individual "production cycle" by for instance giving her an increased amount of "milking permissions" when producing the most, i.e., shortly after birth (interviews).

Stable systems and AMS thus allow to intensify production and increase profitability by reducing the amount of manual labour required by farmers, which enables them to have larger herds with considerable less workload than in tethered stables or milking systems where cows stand on a large carousel or above a pit, where farmers manually clean the cows' udder and then attach the milking machine. The in section 5.1.1 described systems of categorising bovines into different "cow identities" is thus applied in practice to provide a framework of grouping the cows in different enclosures inside the barn. Since "dry cows", for instance, are not milked as frequently as "dairy cows", they are each held in their respective groups to allow a more organised and effective workflow for the farmer. Frequent regrouping of cows can stress them and can lead to aggressive behaviour, as free-roaming bovines adopt strong social bonds and hierarchies within the herd (Humane Society of the United States, 2016).

Another example of controlling and interfering in farmed bovine's lives is the process of separating mother and calf. Once their baby is taken away, cows may bellow for days or even weeks in effort to locate their calf (interviews 1, 3, 6). Some interviewed farmers explained that this "issue" is worse the more time cow and calf are allowed to spend together, which is why they claimed to separate them after the first day or two (interviews 1, 6). Interestingly, many farmers used comparisons to humans when talking about the cows investment in caring for their offspring. Many explained that cows are pregnant for nine months, "just like humans are", and one interviewee stated that he is fully aware of the emotional trauma he is causing the cow, especially since he has his own children, but claimed that this is a necessary part of dairy production (interview 6). This shows how empathy towards the cows is motivated by notions of constructing them as similar to us, while the dominant belief of dairy production as normal and necessary outweighs negatives like separating mother and calf.

Impregnating cows is a further vital aspect of dairy farming, making the detection of oestrus, the time when cows are fertile, crucial to determine at what time artificial insemination (AI) will be successful. When describing their everyday work at the farm, interviewed farmers said they use the time cleaning the stable to inspect the cows to look for signs of oestrus and to control "udder health" (interviews 2, 3, 5, 6). The practice of AI was described as completely normal everyday activity. Referring to "insemination" was done interchangeably with "breeding" when farmers discussed the strategies they use to ensure that their herd is reproducing the way they desire (interviews 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8). This is an indicator for how the human-led process of insemination is presented as vital part of "producing" more and better animals. Crucial decisions of "breed development" are thus informed and initiated by human expertise, while the cows are once again removed from the process by being presented as passive.

Considering that the intimate contact of touching cows' udders when milking by hand was previously seen as shameful for men (Sommestad, 1994), it becomes apparent which effects the intensification and masculinisation of dairy farming had. Scientific development now allows to directly interfere in and manage cow's reproduction, and while the process of AI is still needed to be performed manually, no connotation of shame or femininity was attached to it

(interviews). Artificially inseminating a cow is a very invasive procedure in which one inserts one arm into the cows' rectum to adequately position the so-called "AI pistol" into the uterus to eject the sperm, which can cause cows to experience stress and pain (Humane Society of the United States 2016, p. 2). The normalisation of this process of forced impregnation illustrates how the representation of gender and sexualisation has been taken out of the common narrative of dairy farming (Adams, 1997; Otomo, 2015; Cudworth, 2008).

Reasoning backwards to ask how the broader context of control must be like to frame the farming of bovines as normal and cultural significant practice, the manifestation of human superiority becomes apparent. As soon as industrial development and the accumulation of capital could be facilitated through the exploitation of farmed bovines, previous conceptions of dairy work as too bodily intimate, feminine, and close to nature were transformed and masculinised (Sommestad, 1994). Establishing control mechanisms, therefore, transformed the trait to be less about bodily interaction, physical labour, and "nature" by emphasising technical inventions, machinery, and "breeding technology". This goes to show that the arrangement and cultivation of practical measures of control are a vital part in the process of constructing, manifesting, and normalising oppression as status quo (Nibert 2002, 14), implicitly subordinating animality, nature, and femininity, to construct human privilege and identity as constituted through the consumption of other animal's lives and bodies.

Such control mechanisms are congruent with the elements of disciplinary power described by Michel Foucault, which are hierarchical observation, normalised judgement and examination, and the control of movement and the body (1977). In these systems of disciplinary power, the body is an object to be acted upon and a tool to be used to apply force and control (Foucault, 1977). Controlling and monitoring nearly every aspect of a farmed cows' life serves to intensify her exploitation by coercing her body and its biological functions to "produce". Categorising cows according to their "usefulness" in the dairy industry is based on corporeal judgement and the taken for granted assumption that such treatment is legitimised by various embodiments of Otherness of being seen as animal, feminine, close to nature, passive and irrational. Foucault describes such overall logic of power and control as:

> "Utopia of judicial reticence: take away life, but prevent the patient from feeling it; deprive the prisoner of all rights, but do not inflict pain; impose penalties free of all pain. […] The modern rituals of execution attest to this double process: the disappearance of the spectacle and the elimination of pain" (1977, p. 11).

While the work of Foucault itself may carry anthropocentric and androcentric bias, his conceptualisations of power can be applied to studying our relation, treatment, and use of other animals as these relations are equally commonplace and mundane as the power relations in prisons, schools, and hospitals explored by Foucault (Palmer 2001, p. 341, 346). The above quote of the utopia of judicial reticence can be applied to farmed cows in the dairy industry in the sense that their lives are initiated, controlled, and ended in a way that manifests human superiority and control as overarching relation of power, while appearing to be a "natural" human-animal relation that allows to farm and kill other animals without harming them. Welfarist ideology in animal agriculture makes such a euphemist claim and suggests some utopia of discrete anthropocentric speciesism that uses and kills other animals "humanely". Its' underlying logic and how it is applied in Swedish dairy farming is discussed in the following section.

5.2.2 The violent logic of happy exploitation

Welfarist ideology follows simple and apparently logical claims to reassure ideas of ethical animal use. The dairy Skånemejerier for instance claims: "If the cows feel good, the milk is good, too"[10] (Kohalsa.se, 2016). Reassuring farmed cows' wellbeing as demonstrated in some measurement of quality of their milk can be understood as commonsensical by a consumer who believes in the legitimacy and necessity of using animals for the production of food, since after all, milk is seen as what cows are for. Skånemejerier recently launched the result of a survey demonstrating that consumers perceive animal welfare as the most important aspect of sustainable dairy production (Mynewsdesk, 2016). Stressing that farmed bovines are healthy and well is thus a powerful tool for marketing dairy as a product. Arla similarly states that: "a happy cow produces more and better quality milk. Happy Cows = Healthy Cows = better milk" (2016f). In a video titled "We care for our cows," it is stated that:

[10] Mår korna bra, blir också mjölken bra (Kohalsa.se, 2016),

> Arla cows are happy cows. Mh, well, how do you know that, you may ask. Do you speak cow? Well, it's actually quite easy. We know from the quantity and quality of our milk. Happy cows produce more milk, and it's better quality. And that's why we look after our cows and treat them individually. For Alfred, welfare and good farming go hand in hand. Using his skills, and support from our quality control program Arlagarden, Alfred's sure his cows are healthy, comfortable, and well fed. He adjusts his cow's feed according to their individual needs. They each have personal records to see that they are doing well and producing the best quality milk. Because the cows like to lie down chewing the cud for many hours a day, Alfred makes sure their bedding is just the way they prefer it. Delivering tasty milk to the dairy means giving his cows the best feed and water. A lot of the feed is harvested from his own farm, so he knows he is giving his cows the necessary quality nutrition every day. All the cows get a daily check as part of their quality and welfare routine. Now that's a happy cow! Dairy farming takes dedication. And a real passion for milk! And just as you'd expect, our farmers always give their cows the best treatment. Next time you take an Arla product from your fridge, give a thought to the happy, healthy cows who made it possible. Oh, and Alfred! (Arla, 2016f)

Overemphasising animal welfare routines is, therefore, a successful marketing strategy which the industry uses for its benefit. The mentioning of cows "personal record" hints at the total system of surveillance tracking every aspect of the cows life relevant to increase milk yields. Providing a personal story about a dairy farmer and describing some of the farming methods give the consumer an idea about daily production routines and reassurance about the good intentions of farmer and dairy.

However, judging the cows happiness by the quantity and quality of milk a cow is producing is oversimplifying the real context of how cows are used in the industry. Farmed cows are overbred and virtually "designed" to produce high quantities of milk, measuring the amount of milk they produce is thus to measure their biological functions which were manipulated by humans. Also, the only behaviours mentioned in the example above when cows' "happy life" is presented to the customer are lying down, eating, and drinking. Such a description reinforces ideas about cows as passive and only describe the bare minimum of behaviours granted to cows held in a stable, so as to allow them to "produce" only. Depicting dairy farming in such fractured manner and presenting bovine behaviour only in the frames of dairy production is reinforcing the idea of the cow

as a resource for human consumption and therewith de-politicises the dominating process so as to leave it unquestioned.

Skånesemin, a service provider offering to perform insemination, dehorning, and other "services" to dairy farmers, follows the same rationale of equating cow's wellbeing with productivity, which they use on their website to sell their expertise in assessing just that:

> That a thriving cow who enjoys life milks more and is more profitable, well that is pretty obvious. But how do you actually know how the cows are doing? Well, by simply asking them. "Ask the cow" is a service in which an adviser makes an objective assessment of the animal welfare in your particular herd. We assess cows, young animals and calves and we are for instance, looking at behaviour, cleanliness, body condition and possible injury. […] (Skanesemin.se, 2016b; my translation)[11]

The oversimplification of just casually "asking" a cow how she is doing is using the same strategy as the "happy/healthy cow equals high productivity" claim. These examples illustrate that framing the oppression of other animals as normal and totally unconcerning practice is best done by presenting it as such as to not provoke questioning. Suggesting that humans could make "an objective assessment of animal welfare" implies that humans are in the superior position of judging impartially over the condition of the Other. This dismisses that in the instance of dairy farming, the bovine Other is completely left to the situation humans put them in. The decisive factor in determining the cows welfare is measured by the amount of milk that can be taken from her, which relates to how well she functions in the system (see 5.1). These criteria are decided by the farmer and are centred around making use of her as exploitable and replaceable resource.

Framing someone who is exploited as "happy" and twisting how they are treated and viewed to serve the agenda of the superior follows an intersectional set of power and oppression that applies to larger systems of domination subordinating Others of all species. For example, in Sweden, bovines have to be "anaesthetised" before being killed, and allowed methods to so is to stun them with a captive bolt pistol, rifle or shotgun (Jordbruksverket, 2016d). This procedure of stunning other animals before killing them has been presented as

[11] Att en välmående ko som trivs med livet mjölkar mer och är mer lönsam är väl ganska självklart. Men hur vet man egentligen hur korna har det? Jo, genom att helt enkelt fråga dem. "Fråga Kon" är en tjänst där en rådgivare gör en objektiv bedömning av djurvälfärden i just din besättning. Vi bedömer kor, ungdjur och kalvar och vi tittar bland annat på beteende, renhet, hull och eventuella skador. […] (Skanesemin.se, 2016b)

avoiding cruelty (Svärd, 2015). Telling the consumer that farmed animals are anaesthetised before they are killed may seem like a reassuring and untroubled procedure. The term "anaesthesia" is usually used to refer to the administration of a drug and conveys that it is possible to somehow kill other animals compassionately by avoiding stress and pain. Getting shot in one's head with a metal bolt or weapon does not provide the same harmonious image. Perceiving other animals as killable allows such euphemisms to go unquestioned (Joy, 2010).

The here discussed example of cow's oppression is constituted and framed by notions of binary value-hierarchisation in which what is connoted with femininity and nature is rigorously subordinated and controlled by notions of masculinity, human culture and technological development. Human subjectivity and privilege are therewith produced on the backs of those seen as lesser subjects or even objects, and considering the welfare of those exploited is a further mechanism to normalise human superiority. This notion of human superiority is contrasted against "the animal" in general and the "dairy cow" specifically. Additionally, its underlying oppressive logic is used to emphasise Swedish superiority through depicting positive cultural values of national dairy production as contrasted to other nations producing dairy, which is demonstrated in the following section.

5.2.3 Swedish added value in dairy production

Dairy farming played a crucial role to facilitate economic and political development in Sweden (see 2.2). The argument of Swedish added value seeks to uphold the practice of dairy farming as crucial social and cultural practice. LRF Dairy has the mandate to lobby for Swedish dairy businesses by upholding a positive image of milk as a food product and to function as a hub for industrial collaboration (LRF, 2016c). To do so, they published a video stressing the vital importance of preserving Swedish dairy production. The video starts by showing animated pictures of a smiling farmer and a cow wearing a winner's medal. The narration of the video reads:

> Swedish milk production is the most sustainable in the world. We have healthy cows that are treated well and produce milk and meat of the highest quality. Milk production is the very motor of Swedish agriculture. So if milk

> production disappears, our meat production and cultivation also decimate. And then we get even fewer jobs, less of an open landscape, and less biodiversity. In Sweden, we have high demands on sustainability and animal agriculture. That entails that farmers have higher costs than other farmers in Europe. But the payment for milk is the same. That makes it extra tough for farmers in Sweden. So tough that five dairy farmers have to shut down [their business] every week. If we continue on this path, we soon have no dairy farmers left in Sweden. Swedish milk production is the backbone of Swedish agriculture. Do you want Swedish dairy products, open landscapes, jobs in the entire country and sustainable Swedish food production? Sign for milk on www.lrf.se/formjolken (YouTube, 2016b; my translation).[12]

Presenting milk production as "backbone of Swedish agriculture" of Swedish food production and as a vital part of a functioning society is done by key actors in the dairy industry (ibid.; Jordbruksverket, 2016a). Both interviews conducted with LRF personnel reflected this rationale, and emphasised that the central issue in the "milk crisis" is that the dairy industry finds itself in a "cost crisis" as the real costs of production are not competitive with international milk prices (phone interviews, LRF).

The represented problem of the milk crisis is thus that the wider economic system impairs on Swedish values of how to produce dairy, which is said to impact the entire Swedish agricultural system. Farming bovines is therewith presented as necessary to uphold the entire sector of Swedish agricultural production, which attaches enormous importance to it because being able to produce food on the national level connotes a sense of independence and self-reliance. Through using notions of national values and consciousness, the discourse of the milk crisis is utilised to represent notions of Swedish identity as superior. Scrutinising the conceptualisation of bovines in the dairy industry as well as applied farming methods enables to explain this construction of Swedish identity through the abstraction of two groups of subordinated Others.

First, cows are conceptualised through images of reproduction, prosperity, generosity and motherhood (Stevens *et al.*, 2013), connoting femininity and naturalness. Their exploitation is first and foremost motivated by their species

[12] Svensk mjölkproduktion är världens mest hållbara. Vi har friska kor som behandlas väl och producera mjölk och kött av högsta kvalité. Mjölkproduktionen är själva motorn i det svenska lantbruket. Så om mjölkproduktionen försvinner, så decimeras också vår köttproduktion och odling. Och då får vi även färre arbetstillfällen, mindre öppna landskap, och mindre biologiskt mångfald. I Sverige ställer vi höga krav på hållbarhet och djurhållning. Vilket innebär att bönderna har högre kostnader än andra bönder i Europa. Men betalningen för mjölken är densamma. Det gör det extra tufft för bönderna i Sverige. Så pass tufft att fem mjölkbönder lägger ner varje vecka. Fortsätter vi på den här vägen har vi snart inga mjölkbönder kvar i Sverige. Svensk mjölkproduktion är den svenska lantbrukets ryggrad. Vill du ha svenska mjölkprodukter, öppna landskap, jobbtillfällen i hela landet och en hållbar svensk matproduktion? Skriv på för mjölken på www.lrf.se/formjolken (YouTube, 2016b).

difference, but the production of dairy relies on the exploitation of the reproductive abilities of certain female bovines. “Spent” females, those with unprofitable features, or male bovines are exploited due to those human-identified differences and turned into “meat” earlier than later. With Swedish discourse attaching such social and cultural importance to the oppression of other animals, one could claim that the “dairy cow” symbolises some nonhuman version of Mother Svea, upholding the metaphor of Swedish *folkhemmet*, the “people’s home”, through her seemingly self-less act of giving her bodily fluids to feed us humans, generate jobs, and contribute to a balance of industrial progress and naturalness which, constituting important values of Swedish identity.

Second, Swedish values in dairy production and consumption are abstracted against human Others, as Swedish farmers are represented with high social values for their country’s agriculture, animal welfare, and the environment but do not earn enough money because farmers in other countries with supposedly less regard for such values sell cow’s milk for lower prices. Additionally, farming practices such as pasture release or regulated slaughter methods ascribing to stun other animals before killing them fulfil the same purpose of strengthening Swedish values as superior. The procedure of stunning other animals before killing them was contrasted to other types of slaughter, such as traditional home slaughter on farms and Sami reindeer slaughter, which were seen as primitive and cruel, thereby using slaughter practices of “Others” to emphasise social hierarchies (Svärd 2015, p. 224-225, 243-248). A disturbing contemporary example of such debate can be seen in the arguments brought against the production of *halal* and *kosher* meat, again attaching cultural and racial differences to methods of killing other animals (Svärd 2015, p. 256; Burt 2006).

Connecting these systems of social exclusion to wider discourses of domination shows that economic consequences of the Swedish milk crisis are the result of falling victim to the very logics that uphold the farming of other animals in the animal industrial complex as they uphold the logics of modern capitalism and the new global economy. The capitalist drive to achieve the highest possible profit margins requires an intensification of farming methods, which does not always pair up with animal welfare values or any other values pushed for in the Swedish added value argument.

Looking at this issue by paying attention to the situation of farmed animals shows that current human-animal relations play a vital role in upholding dominant power structures by reinforcing beliefs in that this is just "how things are". Underlying mechanisms of power are thus left unquestioned. What this shows is that the violent logics seeking to legitimise the oppression of other animals are following the same rationales as those driving the oppression of human Others, be it Swedish dairy farmers who loose their business to enterprises in other countries, or be it marginalised groups of humans suffering from structural inequalities created through vast disparities in the global distribution of wealth. The oppression of other animals is moreover a very real material precondition for the fulfilment of privileges humans grant themselves.

Holding on to romanticised images of idyllic Swedish dairy farming is not a solution to the real issues of sustainable food production and consumption it seeks to address but feeds into the corporate system of institutionalised oppression. That being said, decreasing the number of dairy farmers in a country like Sweden where "added value" means added cost and less profit is an unavoidable development of a competitive capitalist economy. Those who cannot invest in the newest technology or expand their business to increase profitability have to surrender to those who can, especially in a monopoly system where product prices are largely steered by one player, as is the case with Arla and the Swedish dairy industry. Economic interest in the oppression of other animals thus not only drives oppressive farming practices but also reinforces and normalises oppressive ideologies such as speciesism, animal welfarism and sexism.

6. Conclusion

This study problematised the dominant anthropocentric human-animal divide with the aim to emphasise the intersectionality of dominations across species boundaries. As an example for intersectional oppression, key practices and beliefs of Swedish dairy farming were scrutinised to demonstrate their role as driving force of oppressive ideology and practice and the perpetuation of human privilege. Cow's milk is commonly promoted as natural, local, and nutritious food that plays a positive role for Swedish culture, human health, and the environment. This notion of centralising dairy production in an industry resting on the exploitation of

other animal's lives and reproductive ability intersects with symbolism commonly attached to ideas of animality and femininity in general and bovine femininity in particular.

Main focal points to highlight bovine's oppression in the dairy industry were therefore its implicit constructions and treatment of farmed bovines as means of production to accumulate profit as well as attached and cultivated notions of a distinct pro-animal welfare ideology serving as a bearer for Swedish identity construction. In order to examine and address these problems, semi-structured interviews with Swedish dairy farmers and staff of the lobby organisation LRF Dairy Sweden were conducted and analysed together with the second pool of material, consisting of online material from relevant stakeholders of the Swedish dairy industry.

Intersectionality was used as theory and method to expose how underlying power relations situate the oppression of other animals alongside other spheres of domination, making it to a relevant issue for political theory. Drawing on conceptual frames from Critical Animal Studies and employing a critical realist methodology, I argued that intersectionality needs to acknowledge and include species difference into its theoretical frame in order to keep its credibility to oppose domination in a comprehensive manner. This is because if difference is taken seriously in (feminist) political theory, the difference of species cannot be ignored since it constitutes a central organising mechanism of social relations and human identity formation.

To emphasise the intersectionality of dominations across the human-animal divide, the main findings were presented in two distinct but related debates. The first demonstrated how farmed bovines are constructed as subordinate Others. Interviews with dairy farmers showed how farmed bovines are categorised according to human-identified and valorised social differences such as the cows' age, sex, bodily physique and function, as well as personality and behaviour in order to determine their economic use value to produce dairy and "meat". Since subjugating and framing fellow living beings to serve as resources requires to legitimise such domination to appear as justified, the relations farmers had to the cows were framed by value-hierarchical binaries organised according to the usefulness that could be attached to their existence. Abstracting these framings

with a discussion of conceptions of bovine subjectivity and agency illustrated that granting them some lesser degree of subject-hood allows to perpetuate human privilege.

The second debate strengthened the findings of the first by contextualising cow's oppression through connecting it to material practices and dominating ideologies of the Swedish dairy industry. Discussing applied methods of control were identified to resemble power structures of other confined and violated beings, exposing the violent logics of animal welfarism. Lastly, such welfarist ideology was situated into wider spheres of power by problematising the argument of Swedish added value. Speciesist beliefs facilitating welfarist claims resemble and incorporate exclusionary beliefs of Swedish identity as superior and imply the general subordination of connotations like femininity, nature, and animality.

This study adds to previous literature arguing that the oppression of other animals is inextricably linked with human oppression of other humans (e.g., Nibert 2002; Taylor & Twine, 2014). Through addressing the paradox of leaving the category "human" unquestioned in intersectional analyses, it is possible to shed light on one of the building blocks of social exclusion; the process of dehumanisation. The field of CAS treats the condition of other animals as deeply embedded with the human condition and draws on intersectionality as explanatory frame and theory. Human-centred approaches of intersectional research can gain depth for more comprehensive understandings of the complexity of social differences by adopting species difference into their frames. Further research extending the scope of this study is necessary on the methodological foundations of such interspecies intersectional approaches. Including other animals into political theory enriches its normative commitment to challenge oppression.

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Interview 4. Staff member at LRF Dairy Sweden. Telephone interview. 3rd February 2016.

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Interview 7. Farmer of a dairy farm in Skåne. Interview. 8th February 2016.

Interview 8. Farmer of a dairy farm in Skåne. Interview. 8th February 2016.

Interview 9. Staff member at LRF Dairy Sweden. Telephone interview. 29th February 2016.