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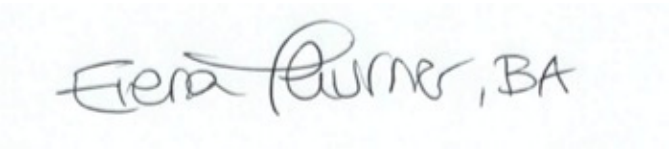

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To Stutzi (2014-2018), who taught me in his very own way the difference between a companion animal and a pet.

Preface

Great accomplishments in a person's life are never the success story of this person alone but also of the people who have taught her how to succeed. Especially, this holds true for one's parents. That is why, at this point, I want to express my deep gratitude to my "intellectual father" and mentor, professor Herwig Grimm: First and foremost, for his endless support over the years, for supervising this thesis and, last but not least, for believing in me in the first place. Moreover, I thank heartily my biological parents for their never-ending patience in supporting my studies emotionally as well as financially.

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Introduction

This master's thesis is an attempt to surpass the boundaries of my own philosophical thinking. So far, I have been inclined to tackle normative questions by an essentialist method that is commonly employed in applied ethics. Typically, applied ethicists first clarify the ontological or moral status of some entity by specifying necessary and/or sufficient properties that characterize her essence. Once the entity's status is known, it is deduced, in a second step, what moral obligations moral agents owe her. I have applied the first step of this method to specify the ontological status of the patient in veterinary practice: In this context, I have determined necessary and sufficient criteria that an animal who is treated by a veterinarian has to meet in order to qualify as a patient (Thurner et al. 2018; Thurner 2020).

However, essentialism is a controversial methodological approach that has serious shortcomings. For this reason, Armstrong et al. stated in 1983 that "it is widely agreed today in philosophy, linguistics, and psychology, that the definitional program [that means: the essentialist method, E.T.] for everyday lexical categories has been defeated" (1983, 268). At the time Armstrong et al. proclaimed the end of the essentialist era, the essentialist methodological approach known as "moral individualism" (Rachels 1999 [1990], 173) just began to take root in animal ethics. Groundbreaking moral individualistic works were published in 1975 by Peter Singer (2009 [1975]) and in 1983 by Tom Regan (2004 [1983]). In the form of moral individualism, essentialist thinking pervades and dominates the discourse in animal ethics to the present day. Still, it is common to clarify first an animal's ontological or moral status to deduce, in a second step, what moral practices of treating the animal follow from her status. To overcome the deficiencies of this method, I develop an alternative approach that builds on the notion of social practices and turns the essentialist argumentation pattern round: I argue that our social practices of interacting with animals determine and shape who animals are. I elaborate my practice-oriented methodological approach to animal ethics by the example of distinguishing pets and companion animals.

Hitherto, pets and companion animals have not been distinguished clearly and beyond all doubt in the scientific discourse. The few attempts that have been made to define what a pet or companion animal is typically pertain to moral individualistic thinking: The definitions refer to intrinsic properties of the pet or companion animal that are often considered necessary and/or sufficient criteria for the status of pet or companion animal. However, from my point of view, this is problematic. After all, relations and social

practices considerably influence what a pet or companion animal is. Therefore, the research question of my thesis is the following: *How can pets and companion animals be distinguished in a practice-oriented way?*

It has to be noted that my thesis solely adds to the first step of the aforementioned argumentation pattern: I provide a conceptual distinction between pets and companion animals but do not draw any moral implications on how these animals should be treated from a moral point of view. Also, there is a remark on terminological matters that I must mention first. As I seek to *distinguish* pets and companion animals, I can neither use the term "pet" nor "companion animal" to denote the group of animals who share human homes. Also, I cannot use the terms "pet ethics" (e.g. Yeates and Savulescu 2017, 348) and "companion animal ethics" (e.g. Sandøe et al. 2016) to denote the realm of ethical questions that concern these animals. Instead, a neutral term is required for these animals and the corresponding discourse that does not commit oneself to the category of pet or the category of companion animal. Inspired by Cora Diamond's notion of an animal as a "fellow creature" (1978, 474), I coin the term "animal fellows" to refer to the animals who share human homes. To the corresponding discourse on ethical questions that concern these animals I refer to as the realm of "human-animal fellowship".

The main source of inspiration for my practice-sensitive approach is the later Wittgenstein. The methodology I develop draws on Wittgenstein's "Philosophical Investigations"[2] (2009 [1953]) with a particular focus on his notion of family resemblance. Interestingly, Wittgenstein has undergone the same metamorphosis with regard to his philosophical thinking that I have depicted at the beginning: While Wittgenstein's "Tractatus logico-philosophicus" (2016b [1921]) is a paragon of essentialist thinking, his "Philosophical Investigations" break with this tradition by establishing an alternative approach of philosophizing. I elaborate my practice-sensitive methodological approach step by step. The starting point of my examination is best described by the following paragraph of the "Philosophical Investigations": "A philosophical problem has the form: 'I don't know my way about.'" (Wittgenstein 2009, §123)[3] Thus, my thesis is designed as a manual to structure my thoughts in the process of developing a practice-oriented method of philosophizing.

My thesis is structured in three parts. In the first part, I portray how pets and companion

[2] Wittgenstein wrote the "Philosophical Investigations" in German. In what follows, I cite the English translation that is accompanied by the original German version in the footnotes.

[3] "Ein philosophisches Problem hat die Form: »Ich kenne mich nicht aus.«" (2016a, §123)

animals are distinguished by moral individualism. First, I consider how pets and companion animals have been discussed in the human-animal studies so far (1.1.). In the second step, I examine in detail the theoretical foundation of moral individualism and the structure of its argument (1.2.). Then, I depict how moral individualistic thinking has been applied to the distinction of pets and companion animals (1.3.). In the fourth step, I illustrate the deficiencies of distinguishing pets and companion animals by means of the moral individualistic method (1.4.). In the final step, I synthesize my findings and depict the practice-oriented method that is required to distinguish pets and companion animals appropriately (1.5.).

In the second part of my thesis, I elaborate methodological tools to distinguish pets and companion animals in a practice-sensitive way. In the first step, I introduce the theoretical frame of practice theory and clarify central concepts of practice-thinking (2.1.). Second, I consider Theodore Schatzki's (2008 [1996]) Wittgensteinian account of practice theory to elaborate a Wittgensteinian understanding of social practices (2.2.). In the third step, I analyze Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance as presented in the "Philosophical Investigations" (2009) (2.3.). In the final step, I synthesize my findings and characterize human interactions with pets and companion animals as structurally resembling social practices (2.4.).

The third part of my thesis is dedicated to drawing and justifying my practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals. In the first step, I finally distinguish pets and companion animals in a practice-sensitive way (3.1.): I argue that the social practices of pethood and companionship resemble each other structurally and materially but are distinguished by the emphasis of certain material aspects. In the second step, I present empirical findings that substantiate the practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals I have developed (3.2.). In view of the fact that these findings originate from different disciplines, my thesis affirms the interdisciplinary character of the scientific discourse on human-animal fellowship. As the contribution of sociology is of particular importance for my argument, I integrate sociological findings where useful throughout my thesis. In the last step, I synthesize the findings of the final chapter (3.3.).

My thesis is rounded off by a conclusion where I summarize and synthesize the findings of my preceding analysis.

1. Abandoning moral individualism in human-animal fellowship

In this chapter, I develop the thesis that the distinction of pets and companion animals requires a practice-oriented methodological approach. Thereby, I proceed in five steps. To begin with, I examine how pets and companion animals have been made subjects of the scientific discourse so far. In the second step, I introduce moral individualism as the dominant methodological approach to tackle issues in animal ethics. I examine its theoretical basis and the structure of the moral individualistic argument. Afterwards, I go into detail and present the distinct form moral individualistic thinking has taken with regard to the distinction of pets and companion animals. In the fourth step, I consider deficiencies of this method. The nub of my criticism is not a normative but rather an analytical one: I argue that solely a practice-sensitive methodological approach is suited to draw a conceptual distinction between pets and companion animals. I do not point out any moral implications that could follow from this distinction. The final step of this chapter is dedicated to synthesizing my findings and detailing the practice-oriented approach that is required to distinguish pets and companion animals.

1.1. Pets and companion animals in the human-animal studies

There is a long-standing history of humans keeping animals. In the course of domestication, humans began to utilize animals for their own ends. Yet, there is a special class of animals who are kept by humans without fulfilling any practical function (Serpell 1996 [1986], 13). Typically, human keepers are particularly fond of these animals. The “habit” (Serpell 2019, 18) of having such animals is by no means a recent phenomenon but traces back to the very origins of our species. For thousands of years, humans across cultures have kept animals as fellows (Serpell 1996). Serpell (1996, 72; 2019) even holds that the keeping of animal fellows might have been a prerequisite for, if not a driving force of, domestication. Over the last century, the activity of adopting animals with the primary – and often sole – purpose of companionship has gained great popularity. This development is coupled with a fundamental change of the relation between humans and their accompanying animals. Since the 1980ies, it is observed that a major part of humans perceives the animals who share their lives as family members (e.g. Albert and Bulcroft 1988; Cain 1983; Franklin 2006; Hirschman 1994; Taylor et al. 2006). A recent survey that was conducted in the USA by The Harris Poll indicates that this trend is increasing: While 88% of the responding pet owners considered their animals family members in 2007, this percentage has increased up to

95% in 2015 (Shannon-Missal 2015). In addition to the status of family member, it is also reported that some humans even perceive their animal fellows as children (e.g. Greenebaum 2004; Shir-Vertesh 2012; Turner 2001).

The complexity of these relations indicates the need to examine the status of animal fellows to be able to distinguish them from other animals. Particularly important is the coinage of an appropriate term to refer to these animals. Philosophy has a history of defining, i.e. specifying, concepts that dates back to Socratic times (Ben-Yami 2017, 407f.). In the scientific discourse, philosophy has especially been valued for "its capacity to bring high degrees of conceptual exactness" (Brennan 2017). Accordingly, the task of sharpening a concept for animals who share humans' lives is taken up by philosophers. However, such clarificatory attempts face an obstacle. Presently, two distinct terms are in use to denote the animals in question: The traditional term "pet" and the neologism "companion animal" that was created recently. To sort this conceptual unclarity out, I briefly sketch the state of research on animal fellows in the human-animal studies. Afterwards, I explore how the terms "pet" and "companion animal" are related in the scientific debate.

1.1.1. The scientific study of animal fellows

Unlike the phenomenon itself, the scientific study of the special bond between humans and their animal fellows is rather new. The zoologist James Serpell is one of the pioneers in this research field. He holds in the preface of his ground-breaking book "In the Company of Animals. A Study of Human-Animal Relationships" that in 1975 "[a]lmost nothing" (Serpell 1996 [1986], xiv) had been published on the matter. At that time, the study of animal fellows was established by Serpell and a number of other scholars "consisting mainly of veterinarians, psychologists, psychiatrists, medical doctors, social workers and other zoologists" (Serpell 1996, xiv). So, the discourse on animal fellows has been an interdisciplinary field since its beginnings in the 1970ies.

There is a remarkable scarcity of philosophical contributions to the study of animal fellows. Gary Varner observed in 2002: "Although philosophers have written much about the moral status of non-human animals […] since the 1970s, they have had little to say about pets specifically […]." (2002, 451) Also, this quote gives information about the fact that the existing discourse has mainly focused on the category of pet by then. Philosophy appeared on the scene to join the scientific study of animal fellows by the end of the 1990ies in response to the popularity of the Tamagotchi. What awakened

philosophers' interest in animal fellows was the fact that the Tamagotchi was considered "a virtual pet" (Barnbaum 1998, 41). Deborah Barnbaum, the first philosopher prominently commenting on the matter, regarded this as a counterintuitive and inappropriate use of the term "pet". In her short text "Why Tamagatchis Are Not Pets" from 1998, she draws up a list of four criteria that an entity has to meet to qualify as a pet: The affection criterion, the domicile criterion, the dependency criterion and, finally, the discontinuity criterion. Unlike her cat, so Barnbaum argues, the Tamagotchi does not fulfill all of them. That is why the cat but not the Tamagotchi can be considered a pet. Barnbaum's contribution directed other philosophers' attention to the debate on animal fellows. Building on and extending Barnbaum's work, Varner elaborated in 2002 an extensive criteriology for the concepts of pet and companion animal. Nowadays, Barnbaum's and Varner's line of conceptualization has become standard as well as a common reference point for discussions concerning animal fellows (e.g. Andreozzi 2013; Palmer and Kasperbauer forth.; Sandøe et al. 2016, 4ff.; du Toit 2016). Another source for tracing back the origins of the philosophical debate on animal fellows is Christine Overall's anthology "Pets and People. The Ethics of Our Relationships with Companion Animals" from 2017. There, Overall identifies the paper "Companion and Assistance Animals: Benefits, Welfare Safeguards, and Relationships" by Jean Harvey (2008) as "one of the earliest philosophical discussions of ethics and companion animals" (Overall 2017a, xiii). Given the fact that Harvey's paper was published in 2008, Overall's observation supports the thesis that the philosophical discourse on animal fellows is a rather new phenomenon. In this context, "Pets and People" (Overall 2017c) is particularly outstanding for being a self-declared "philosophical anthology" (Overall 2017d, ix) on the subject.

Presently, the philosophical interest in sharpening an appropriate concept for animal fellows seems to have faded away. With the exception of Barnbaum (1998) and Varner (2002), the discourse exhibits a scarcity of publications that make the conceptualization of these animals an explicit and exclusive subject of discussion. In a few cases, scholars from other disciplines have made corresponding efforts. Worth mentioning is the psychologist Eddy (2003), whose attempt to clarify the concept "pet" has evoked a whole series of replies by Hart (2003), Rollin and Rollin (2003) and Sanders (2003). By drawing on Sanders' (2003) reply to Eddy (2003), the sociologist Wrye (2009) points out an enriching relational starting point to conceptualize animal fellows. On the whole, it seems that the conceptualization is no longer considered a burning question in the

study of animal fellows. Rather, it has become common to open the analysis and ethical discussion of human-animal fellowship by a short definition to clarify the inquiry's extension (e.g. Andreozzi 2013, 25f.; Bok 2011, 769; DeMello 2012, 147ff.; Grier 2020, 292; Milligan 2009, 403; Overall 2017b, xviiiff.; Palmer and Kasperbauer forth.; Pierce 2020, 316f.; Sandøe et al. 2016, 4ff.; Serpell 2019, 17).

In view of the fact that the discourse on animal fellows is interdisciplinary in nature, I integrate literature of a wide range of disciplines to confirm my philosophical thesis. Currently, sociology is one of the driving forces in the scientific study of human-animal fellowship. Therefore, in my thesis I link both disciplines by drawing on sociology's methodological insights and empirical findings. These are the most important cornerstones of the current state of research on animal fellows in the human-animal studies. In the next step, I explore how the terms "pet" and "companion animal" relate to one another in the interdisciplinary debate.

1.1.2. "Pet" vs. "companion animal"

Etymologically, the standard dictionary by Merriam-Webster (2020b) distinguishes two distinct meanings of the noun "pet": First, a "pet" is "a pampered and usually spoiled child" (2020b) or "a person who is treated with unusual kindness or consideration" (2020b). However, the meaning relevant for the purpose of my thesis is the following one: Also, Merriam-Webster defines as a pet "a domesticated animal kept for pleasure rather than utility" (2020b). A detailed analysis and discussion of this second meaning can be found in Eddy (2003). By contrast, Merriam-Webster explains the noun "companion animal" as "a domesticated animal: PET" (2020a), thereby immediately referring to the aforementioned entry on the term "pet". The excursion into etymology offers another crucial insight: According to Merriam-Webster (2020a; 2020b), the use of the second meaning of "pet" dates back to the year 1581, while the term "companion animal" first appeared in 1897.

This etymological fact is also reflected in the human-animal studies. In the academic debate, the expression **"pet"** is depicted as the traditional term that has come into general use historically for denoting the animals who share human lives as fellows (Grier 2006, 7; Hart 2003, 118; Overall 2017b, xviii). Hart (2003, 118) notices that the shortness of the term "pet" might make it more attractive than its counterpart "companion animal". Thus, Hart deems it "unlikely that the term, pet, will decline in use" (2003, 118). Various scholars have elaborated a conceptualization of how the term "pet" is to

be defined (e.g. Andreozzi 2013, 25f.; Barnbaum 1998; Bok 2011, 769; DeMello 2012, 147ff.; Grier 2020, 292; Milligan 2009, 403; Pierce 2020, 316f.; Serpell and Paul 2003 [1994], 129; Thomas 1984, 112ff.; Varner 2002). Although these conceptualizations differ in degree of precision and content, they frequently consist in an explicit list of criteria an entity has to meet to qualify as a pet (e.g. Andreozzi 2013, 25f.; Barnbaum 1998; Grier 2020, 292; Thomas 1984, 112ff.; Varner 2002).

According to the historian Grier (2020, 298), the rivalling term **"companion animal"** has come into fashion at the end of the 1970ies. It refers to "a relationship where the traditional hierarchy between owner and animal is blurred and where the animal is entitled to make claims on the owner" (Grier 2020, 298). So, the expression "companion animal" denotes an animal fellow who has an egalitarian relationship with her human keeper: The keeper acknowledges that the animal possesses a certain degree of autonomy and is responsive to the expressions of the animal's will. In the discourse, the neologism "companion animal" is also associated with the "relational" (Pierce 2020, 317) and an increased emphasis on the "social or emotional" (Serpell and Paul 2003, 129) dimension of human-animal fellowship. As such, it depicts "the growing significance and appreciation" (Hart 2003, 118) of animal fellows in human life.

Several authors have distinguished pets and companion animals by providing a more or less explicit criteriology for each concept (e.g. Andreozzi 2013, 25f.; Palmer and Kasperbauer forth.; Sandøe et al. 2016, 4ff.; Serpell 2019, 17; Varner 2002). However, a sharp distinction between both concepts that is universally accepted or generally used does not exist. Occasionally, authors establish a conceptual distinction between pets and companion animals but mix both concepts up in use. Some of them declare this a deliberate choice (e.g. Serpell 2019, 17), some seem to have done it by accident (e.g. Andreozzi 2013). Others use the terms "pet" and "companion animal" synonymously right from the outset (e.g. DeMello 2012, 147).

Notwithstanding that, there is a controversy on the legitimacy of using the term "pet" at all. Some authors like, for instance, Linzey and Cohn (2011, viii) reject its use as they consider "pet" a degrading expression. This tendency is also observed by commentators on the subject (e.g. Bok 2011, 791; Eddy 2003, 105; Sandøe et al. 2016, 4). In the literature, it is reflected that the term "pet" is associated with "a hierarchical relationship" (Overall 2017b, xix) and disrespect to "animals' own dignity or integrity" (Sandøe et al. 2016, 4). Therefore, scholars boycotting this expression prefer the use of the

rivalling term “companion animal” as an appropriate alternative to “pet”. A subdiscussion of this issue concerns the appropriateness of the term “owner”. Referring to the Guardian Initiative, DeMello (2012, 164) explains that “owner” has been exposed as an equally problematic term that degrades animal fellows by affirming their status as property. The Guardian Initiative is a campaign of the animal rights organization “In Defense of Animals”: Beginning with Boulder in 2000, this campaign has induced various US-American cities to change the legal status of humans keeping animal fellows from “owner” to “guardian” (DeMello 2012, 164; In Defense of Animals 2019; Irvine and Cilia 2017, 3; Rollin 2006, 63). Commentators report that it has also been suggested to replace the dichotomy “pet”/“owner” by the dichotomy “companion animal”/“caregiver” or “guardian” in the discourse (e.g. Bok 2011, 791; DeMello 2012, 164; Irvine and Cilia 2017, 3; Pierce 2020, 317). Again, Linzey and Cohn (2011, viii) serve as a paradigmatic example of authors who advocate such a change in terminology. In view of these developments, it is not surprising that commentators have interpreted the term “companion animal” as the “politically correct” (e.g. Eddy 2003, 105; Nicholson 1995; Varner 2002, 460) alternative to the term “pet”. Opponents, on the other hand, boycott the propagated change in terminology and stick to the use of the terms “pet” and “owner”. For instance, Bok (2011, 791) stresses that the use of meliorative terminology does not improve the treatment of animals but rather masks the numerous ways they are abused by humans. In sum, the strategy of substituting one term by the other further blurs both concepts and thereby surrenders a proper distinction between pets and companion animals.

To summarize these findings, there is no agreed distinction between the term “pet” and “companion animal” in the human-animal studies. Frequently, these expressions are either used synonymously or replaced by the other. However, from my point of view, there is a crucial difference between pets and companion animals that has been neglected by the discourse so far. In this thesis, I argue that “pet” and “companion animal” need to be acknowledged as distinct concepts that refer to two different social practices in the fellowship of humans and animals. Although pethood and companionship bear strong structural and material resemblances that further them being mixed up, these practices differ. In the remaining part of this chapter, I focus on how pets and companion animals are conceptualized in the few explicit contributions on the matter. Therefore, I depict in the next step the structure of the methodological approach that is typically used to clarify both concepts.

1.2. The theoretical foundation of moral individualism

In animal ethics, the dominant methodological approach (Grimm and Aigner 2016, 25) to determine humans' moral obligations towards animals is called "moral individualism". Originally, this term has been coined by Rachels (1999 [1990]). Moral individualists ascribe moral status to an entity if the *individual* entity possesses certain morally relevant properties (Rachels 1999, 173ff.). The train of thought that underlies moral individualism is a common argumentation pattern in applied ethics. In the first step, applied ethicists seek to clarify the ontological status of an entity as, for instance, an animal, a fetus, a plant or an artificial machine. Frequently, these findings result in the ascription or denial of some version of moral status to the entity in question. It is assumed that once it is known what or who an entity is, it becomes clear how the entity is to be treated from a moral point of view. Thus, the entity's status serves as a basis to deduce, in the second step, the moral obligations and duties moral agents owe her. The clarification of the concept "pet" and "companion animal" that my thesis adds to is limited to the first step of this argument. At this stage of analysis, moral implications are of secondary importance. Highlighting the moral implications of this conceptualization is such a complex task that it requires a separate investigation. Moral individualists tend to determine the ontological status of the "pet" or "companion animal" by providing a list of one or more criteria an entity has to fulfill to qualify as a pet or companion animal (e.g. Andreozzi 2013, 25f.; Barnbaum 1998; Grier 2020, 292; Palmer and Kasperbauer forth.; Sandøe et al. 2016, 4ff.; Serpell 2019, 17; Thomas 1984, 112ff.; Varner 2002). However, not all the scholars I designate as moral individualists in this context are philosophers. Here, the label "moral individualism" is used to refer to a specific methodological approach that is commonly employed in the social sciences. Despite originating from different disciplines, all conceptualizations pursue the philosophical task of sharpening concepts. That is why I treat them alike.

In fact, the kind of thinking I describe as "moral individualistic" has a long-standing history. As my thesis criticizes the moral individualistic way of conceptualizing "pets" and "companion animals", I explore in this section its theoretical foundations. In the first step, I trace its roots back and locate it in the philosophical tradition. In the second step, I focus on moral individualism itself and analyze the structure of its argument.

1.2.1. Locating the theoretical basis of moral individualism

I make the roots of moral individualistic thinking a subject of discussion by developing

my own classification scheme. Glock (2004) notes that in principle classificatory matters are by no means unproblematic. In view of theoretical diversity and complexity, the labelling of theories might be considered “simplistic, potentially misleading, and down-right ugly” (Glock 2004, 420). However, Glock (2004, 420) also notes that theorizing is virtually impossible without the use of labels. What matters is the quality of the labels which have to be “illuminating and scrupulous” (Glock 2004, 420). Having this warning in the back of my mind, I classify moral individualism with the utmost caution. In what follows, it is portrayed as a methodological approach of analytic philosophy that is essentialist and realist in a particular understanding of these terms.

1.2.1.1. Analytic philosophy

My first argument is that moral individualism constitutes a methodological approach of analytic philosophy. Obviously, that begs the question what analytic philosophy is. According to Glock, analytic philosophy does not have “a single *correct* meaning” (2004, 426). Rather, there is a number of different ways to explain it. Glock (2004, 426ff.) distinguishes six types of definitions. First, there are *topical definitions* that explain analytic philosophy by means of the topics it typically deals with. That concerns particularly the fields of logic, philosophy of language and philosophy of science. The second option are *doctrinal definitions* which explain analytic philosophy by means of a certain doctrine. As an example, Glock quotes Dummet’s claim that analytic philosophy rests on an analysis of language. *Methodological definitions* specify how analysis is conducted in analytic philosophy. For instance, a common notion considers analysis as decomposition. Accordingly, analytic philosophy is perceived as splitting phenomena into single constituents. *Stylistic definitions* focus on analytic philosophy’s characteristic style of articulating thoughts by means of clarity and the use of arguments. Also, one could provide a *genetic or historical* approach to analytic philosophy. It treats analytic philosophy as a continuous nexus of theories that cannot be reduced to a common denominator. The rivalling theories are in constant discussion and thereby influence each other. Finally, Glock highlights the possibility of giving a *family-resemblance definition* of analytic philosophy. This approach perceives analytic philosophy as a Wittgensteinian family resemblance concept that exhibits “a thread of overlapping similarities” (Glock 2004, 436). On this view, analytic philosophy distinguishes itself, among other things, by applying the methods developed by Frege and Russell. Glock states counterarguments to most of these types of definition. He deems a synthesis of the

historical and the family-resemblance definition the most promising strategy to explain analytic philosophy (Glock 2004, 436).

At the present time, analytic philosophy has become the prevailing philosophical tradition, especially in English-speaking countries (Beaney 2014a; Isaac 2019, 199). Despite its triumphant progress, analytic philosophy does not constitute a homogenous framework but has "fragmented into various interlocking subtraditions" (Beaney 2014a). Notwithstanding Glock's (2004) concerns, Beaney (2014a; 2014b) cautiously reduces analytic philosophy to a common denominator: What lies at the heart of all differing versions of analytic philosophy is the importance it attaches to analysis as the central method of doing philosophy. Concurringly, Isaac identifies the "commitment to 'analysis' as an ideal of philosophical inquiry" (2019, 178) as one of its central features. The emphasis on analysis indicates that both authors favor a methodological approach to defining analytic philosophy. In view of the variety of explanatory options, I have the burden of proof to account for why I follow them in choosing the methodological path. First and foremost, moral individualism constitutes a whole branch of multiple theories. As such, its historic continuity cannot be contextualized and compared with other analytic philosophers like it is possible in the case of individual theories. Also, as moral individualistic thinking is not a theory but a methodological approach, it suggests itself to analyze it by means of a methodological definition of analytic philosophy.

However, the methodological path is exposed to a structural challenge that Glock (2004) has anticipated: Corresponding to the theoretical diversity of analytic philosophy, there are differing views on how "analysis" is to be interpreted (Beaney 2014a; Glock 2004, 429). In the most rudimentary sense, Beaney depicts analysis as the activity of tracing a phenomenon back to its foundations: "Perhaps, in its broadest sense, it might be defined as a process of […] working back to what is more fundamental by means of which something, initially taken as given, can be explained or reconstructed." (2014a) So, analysis proves to be a method to split given phenomena into their constituent parts. Conversely, the single constituent parts can be used to explain the initial phenomena. Therefore, the different strands of analytic philosophy are united by the application of different types of analysis that all refer back to the rudimentary understanding (Beaney 2014a and 2014b).

Beaney (2014a) distinguishes three conceptions of analysis. First, the *regressive* conception of analysis. It is defined as "the process of working back to first principles by

means of which something could then be demonstrated" (Beaney 2014). Thus, analysis is understood as a strategy to reduce phenomena to a fixed set of basic principles. This type of analysis dominated the ancient Greek period. Second, there is the *decompositional* conception of analysis. Citing the "Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy", Beaney describes it as "the process of breaking a concept down into more simple parts, so that its logical structure is displayed" (2014a). That is the understanding depicted to illustrate the methodological definition of analytic philosophy as well as the basic meaning of analysis. Perceived as a method of decomposition, analysis consists in the division of phenomena into simpler elements. This conception gained popularity in Cartesian times. The third type is the *transformative or interpretative* conception of analysis. It is characterized by the conviction that "the statements to be analyzed had first to be translated into their 'correct' logical form" (Beaney 2014a). Thus, analysis is deemed a method of examination in purely logical terms. This type of analysis is also known as "*logical analysis*" (Beaney 2014b). In the wake of the development of modern logic by Frege and Russell, analysis has been taken this way in the 20th century. Beaney (2014a) holds that the three forms of analysis do not rival but complement each other in practice and are frequently used in combination.

In this thesis, I develop a practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals that is inspired by Wittgenstein. As Wittgenstein plays such a key role, it is indispensable to elucidate his relationship with analytic philosophy. According to Glock (2004), it is a subject of scientific dispute whether Wittgenstein can be considered an analytic philosopher. While some authors refute this claim, others interpret Wittgenstein "as one, if not the, founder of the analytic movement" (Glock 2004, 421). Glock observes that Wittgenstein "was mainly influenced by analytic philosophers and in turn mainly influenced analytic philosophers" (2004, 439). What concerns his roots, Wittgenstein's thinking was shaped by Frege's and Russell's reflections on logic (Beaney 2014b; Glock 2004, 439; Isaac 2019, 187ff.; Wittgenstein 2016b, 9). Conversely, Wittgenstein's writings have influenced numerous analytic philosophers, in particular the logical empiricists/positivists of the Vienna Circle (Beaney 2014b; Glock 2004, 440; Isaac 2019, 189ff.). Thereby, so Glock (2004, 439), Wittgenstein clearly fulfills the requirement for being an analytic philosopher from a genetic or historical point of view. Glock (2004, 437f.) also argues that the content of Wittgenstein's work qualifies as analytic philosophy from a family-resemblance perspective. Therefore, for Glock (2004) there is no doubt that Wittgenstein was an analytic philosopher.

Commonly, two periods are distinguished in Wittgenstein's writings. Whereas the "Tractatus logico-philosophicus" is the paradigm of Wittgenstein's early stage, his later period is represented by the "Philosophical Investigations" (Biletzki and Matar 2018). Building on Frege and Russell, Wittgenstein elaborates in the "Tractatus" (2016b) an alternative approach to logic that focuses on "the construction of an ideal *notation* rather than an ideal *language*" (Beaney 2014b). Thereby, he was confident, all philosophical problems have been solved (Biletzki and Matar 2018; Wittgenstein 2016b, 10). The "Tractatus" is an analytic classic that has exercised crucial influence, especially on logical empiricism and its developments in contemporary analytic philosophy (Isaac 2019). The later phase, on the other hand, constitutes a radical shift in Wittgenstein's thinking. In fact, Wittgenstein considers the "Philosophical Investigations" (2009 [1953]) a reply to his earlier work that rethinks and abandons basic ideas stated in the "Tractatus" (Biletzki and Matar 2018; Glock 2004, 439; Wittgenstein 2016a, 232). Wittgenstein's later period is characterized by a "turn from formal logic to ordinary language" (Biletzki and Matar 2018). Notably, he does no longer stick to the Tractatarian belief that ordinary language can be reduced to one logical structure (Beaney 2014b) or common essence. Rather, he affirms "the many different uses of language" (Beaney 2014b) by making concepts like language-game and family resemblance a subject of analysis. The later Wittgenstein has also had enormous impact on scientists in analytic philosophy and beyond (Isaac 2019, 197f.). The tension between the two phases even casts doubt upon Wittgenstein's status as analytic philosopher. At times, it is contested that the later Wittgenstein is an analytic philosopher (Glock 2004, 424). According to this view, the early Wittgenstein qualifies as an analytic philosopher for being a wholehearted logician. However, due to his destructive criticism of logic, the argument goes, the later Wittgenstein is no analytic philosopher. Glock rejects this conclusion and insists that "Wittgenstein was an analytic philosopher in all phases of his career" (2004, 421). Beaney (2014b) notices that the shift is accompanied by the application of different methods of analysis. While the early Wittgenstein performs logical as well as decompositional analysis, the later Wittgenstein heralds a "'connective'" (Beaney 2014b) method of analysis. This type of analysis focuses on "the relationships between concepts without assuming that there is a privileged set of intrinsically basic concepts" (Beaney 2014a).

To conclude, I argue that moral individualism pertains to analytic philosophy due to the

methods it employs. Beaney (2014a; 2014b) holds that all positions of analytic philosophy share, at least, a rudimentary understanding of analysis. According to this basic structure, analysis consists in the division of phenomena into simple constituent parts. As moral individualism performs this kind of analysis in tracing entities resp. their moral or ontological status back to its foundations, it is a methodological approach of analytic philosophy. Take, as an example, Singer's moral individualistic theory. He argues: "If a being suffers there can be no moral justification for refusing to take that suffering into consideration. […] If a being is not capable of suffering, or of experiencing enjoyment or happiness, there is nothing to be taken into account." (Singer 2009 [1975], 8) In this passage, Singer attributes the possession of moral status to having the basic property of sentience. Thus, Singer's analysis applies methods of analytic philosophy.

1.2.1.2. Essentialism

Second, I argue that moral individualism is an essentialist position. This raises the question what essentialism is. On a basic level, essentialism can be defined as follows: "A view that holds that a set of characteristics or properties define what it is to be an entity of a certain sort." (Koggel 2012, 354) Following Socrates, it has become common practice to presume that all extensions of a particular kind possess a common essence (Ben-Yami 2017, 407f.; Johnson 2012, 497). Essentialism makes use of the notion of common essences for the purpose of definition. Frequently, such essences are thought of as properties. So, a theory is essentialist if it explains an entity by referring to properties that it (is said to) share(s) with other entities that belong to the same kind.

To narrow essentialism further down, I cite the specification that is suggested by Robertson and Atkins: "*Essentialism* in general may be characterized as the doctrine that (at least some) objects have (at least some) essential properties." (2016) What makes this definition so valuable is that it indicates the existence of different types of properties. In general, a distinction is drawn between the essential and the accidental properties of an entity. This distinction is considered "exclusive and exhaustive" (Robertson and Atkins 2016). Robertson and Atkins (2016) present three different possibilities to determine essential and accidental properties materially: The modal characterization, the definitional characterization and the explanatory characterization. They report that it is controversial whether the three models constitute rivalling descriptions of the same notion or refer to distinct notions. Despite considerable disagreement, Robertson and

Atkins (2016) stress that the modal characterization has become the standard for defining essential and accidental properties. That is why I focus on this definition.

The modal characterization attaches the distinction between essential and accidental properties to the distinction between necessary and possible conditions (Robertson and Atkins 2016). It takes on two forms: First, the basic modal characterization and, second, the existence-conditioned modal characterization which specifies the former. For the purpose of my argument, the basic modal characterization provides a sufficient distinction between essential and accidental properties. According to this view, essential and accidental properties are defined as follows: "*P* is an *essential property* of an object *o* just in case it is necessary that *o* has *P*, whereas *P* is an *accidental property* of an object *o* just in case *o* has *P* but it is possible that *o* lacks *P*." (Robertson and Atkins 2016) In other words, an essential property is a necessary property whereas an accidental property is a possible property of an entity. While an entity needs to possess essential properties, she might lack accidental ones. Consequently, essential properties make an entity what she is. So, essentialism defines an entity by her essential properties – i.e. her common essence – but leaves aside her accidental ones.

Typically, the definition of common essences by essential properties becomes a central subject of analysis in classificatory matters. For the purpose of conceptual clarity, it is customary to ascertain common essences of concepts. In this context, the notion of common essences serves as a tool to classify individuals: If an individual possesses the properties that are deemed essential for a certain concept, she is to be considered an extension of this concept. It has become standard to specify common essences by means of necessary and/or sufficient criteria that guide the application of a concept. Ben-Yami is very clear about this point: "If asked, in a philosophical context, what we mean by a word or phrase, we are still generally expected to provide a necessary and sufficient condition for its application, to specify the common nature shared by all its instances." (2017, 408) This view is also endorsed by Brennan: "A handy tool in the search for precise definitions is the specification of necessary and/or sufficient conditions for the application of a term, the use of a concept, or the occurrence of some phenomenon or event." (2017) Further supporters include, for instance, Beaney (2014a). So, the definition of a concept requires the specification of its common essence by necessary and/or sufficient criteria for its application to entities. This type of definition has been referred to as "analytic definition" (Glock 1996, 120). Historically, the use of analytic definitions traces back to the Socratic-Platonic tradition (Ben-Yami

2017, 407f.). Ever since, explaining the meaning of a concept has been equated with defining its common essence by means of necessary and sufficient conditions (Ben-Yami 2017, 407f.; Glock 1996, 120). Analytic definitions dominate the discourse as they are generally regarded as the only legitimate explanation of concepts (Ben-Yami 2017, 407f.; Glock 1996, 120). As analytic definitions split phenomena up into necessary and sufficient criteria, Beaney (2014a) argues that they perform the decompositional type of analysis. Thus, the use of analytic definitions turns out to be a method of analytic philosophy. In summary, essentialism is a method of analytic philosophy that explains entities by means of analytic definitions: Essentialist theories define an entity by specifying her common essence with necessary and/or sufficient criteria that are considered essential properties and guide her application.

On closer inspection, essentialism proves to be a widespread argumentation pattern in the social sciences. For instance, variants of essentialist thinking are observed in the study of concepts (Armstrong et al. 1983, 267f.), the human nature in the field of trans- and posthumanism (Loh 2018, 148ff.), the notion of family in sociology (Irvine and Cilia 2017, 4) and, the main topic of my thesis, the definition of pets (Wrye 2009, esp. 1037 and 1058f.). In spite of its commonness, essentialism has not been immune to criticism. An outstanding example is the shift in Wittgenstein's philosophy. In his early phase, Wittgenstein had been a fervent advocate of essentialism. By means of the following narration, the later Wittgenstein summarizes the Tractatarian model of using language as follows:

> I send someone shopping. I give him a slip of paper marked 'five red apples'. He takes the slip to the shopkeeper, who opens the drawer marked 'apples'; then he looks up the word 'red' in a chart and finds a colour sample next to it; then he says the series of elementary number-words – I assume that he knows them by heart – up to the word 'five', and for each number-word he takes an apple of the same colour as the sample out of the drawer. (2009, §1)[4]

According to Tractatarian essentialism, the use of language rests on the use of imaginary tables or lists. On a basic level, each concept is precisely explained by an analytic definition that consists in an exhaustive list of the concept's necessary and/or sufficient properties. Accordingly, in using language we constantly go through the imaginary list

[4] "Ich schicke jemand einkaufen. Ich gebe ihm einen Zettel, auf diesem stehen die Zeichen: »fünf rote Äpfel«. Er trägt den Zettel zum Kaufmann; der öffnet die Lade, auf welcher das Zeichen »Äpfel« steht; dann sucht er in einer Tabelle das Wort »rot« auf und findet ihm gegenüber ein Farbmuster; nun sagt er die Reihe der Grundzahlwörter – ich nehme an, er weiß sie auswendig – bis zum Worte »fünf« und bei jedem Zahlwort nimmt er einen Apfel aus der Lade, der die Farbe des Musters hat." (2016a, §1)

of concepts' properties to be able to refer to given entities as extensions of certain concepts. In the "Philosophical Investigations", however, Wittgenstein (e.g. 2009, §53) insists that we simply do not use language this way. By envisioning notions like family resemblance, the later Wittgenstein explicitly dissociates himself from the assumption that entities of the same kind have a common essence (Johnson 2012, 497). This shift in Wittgenstein's thinking is of crucial importance for the distinction between pets and companion animals that I draw in my thesis. In the following, I argue that moral individualistic approaches epitomize the Tractatarian model by appealing to a common essence that pets resp. companion animals supposedly possess. By contrast, the practice-sensitive distinction I develop is fed by the "Philosophical Investigations" in drawing on the later Wittgenstein's rejection of essentialism. So, my thesis takes up a completely different philosophical tradition than moral individualism to tackle the distinction between pets and companion animals.

In conclusion, moral individualism constitutes an essentialist approach in analytic philosophy on account of its use of analytic definitions. The foundations of entities resp. entities' moral or ontological status moral individualism traces back are assumed to be common essences that consist in essential properties. All extensions of this type of entity resp. this type of moral or ontological status are believed to possess this particular essence. Moral individualists specify common essences by providing analytic definitions with necessary and/or sufficient criteria that guide the application of the entity resp. her moral or ontological status. As such, moral individualism performs a decompositional form of analysis. Once again, I illustrate this point by the example of Singer's version of moral individualism. Take, for instance, the following passage: "The capacity for suffering and enjoyment is *a prerequisite for having interests at all*, a condition that must be satisfied before we can speak of interests in a meaningful way." (Singer 2009, 7) Subsequently, he continues: "If a being is not capable of suffering, or of experiencing enjoyment or happiness, there is nothing to be taken into account." (Singer 2009, 8) Building on Bentham, Singer depicts having the basic essential property of sentience, which also constitutes having interests, as a *necessary* criterion for the possession of moral status. Hence, Singer's moral individualistic theory proves to be essentialist.

1.2.1.3. Realism

Third, I develop the thesis that moral individualism is a realist position. What is realism? According to Miller (2019), emphasis of the existence and independence of facts are

the two most important components that characterize all versions of realism. Realism assumes that facts exist in the world that are independent of humans:

> **Generic Realism:** *a*, *b*, and *c* and so on exist, and the fact that they exist and have properties such as *F-ness*, *G-ness*, and *H-ness* is (apart from mundane empirical dependencies of the sort sometimes encountered in everyday life) independent of anyone's beliefs, linguistic practices, conceptual schemes, and so on. (Miller 2019)

Contemporary analytic philosophy is crucially influenced by logical empiricism/positivism. This intellectual movement originates from the Vienna Circle which was particularly inspired by the early Wittgenstein's "Tractatus" in the 1920ies (Isaac 2019, 190ff.). Fleeing from World War II, numerous members of the Circle left Austria in the 1930/40ies, many of them migrating to the United States. Thus, logical empiricism/positivism began to shape the English-speaking analytic thinking (Beaney 2014b; Isaac 2019, 195 and 198f.). From the 1960ies on, the North American tradition has dominated analytic philosophy (Beaney 2014b). In view of its triumphant progress, it suggests itself that the legacy of logical empiricism/positivism has also influenced analytic traditions in other parts of the world. However, the crux of the matter relating to realism is the following. Logical empiricists/positivists are empiricists. As such, they believe that all meaningful statements possess correlates in experience (Isaac 2019, 192). Or, in other words: Logical empiricists are convinced "that the 'truth-values' of all meaningful propositions were fixed by *facts*, and that these facts were known only through experience" (Isaac 2019, 192). So, logical empiricism draws on the realist view that facts exist in the world independently of humans. However, it takes the realist argument one step further and stresses that humans are capable of ascertaining facts through experience. It is implied that humans can uncover the facts that exist independently of them in the world by employing the right methods. This notion has been further developed by the Northern American analytic tradition. Especially, Quine's criticism of Carnap in the 1950ies paved the way for what Beaney calls "a view of philosophy as continuous with the natural sciences" (2014b). So, present-day analytic philosophy has increasingly become oriented towards the natural sciences. As a result, it assumes that scientific means constitute the appropriate methods to uncover the facts that exist independently of humans in the universe.

I argue that moral individualism is a realist position in building on an understanding of analytic philosophy that is shaped by the legacy of logical empiricism. It presupposes that an entity's or moral/ontological status' common essence consists of facts that exist

independently in the world. Further, it assumes that humans are equipped to uncover common essences by scientific means. On the one hand, these means include the use of analytic definitions: Common essences are specified with necessary and/or sufficient criteria that guide applicatory matters. On the other hand, scientific means are believed to consist in the incorporation of scientific facts. For this reason, moral individualists frequently integrate findings of the natural sciences to substantiate their arguments. Also, this is demonstrated by Singer's emphasis of sentience. So far, I have shown that Singer considers having the essential property of sentience a necessary criterion for moral status ascription. However, the possession of sentience is an empirical fact that is completely independent of humans. Nevertheless, humans are capable of ascertaining which entities actually have this property by the use of scientific methods. For instance, recent findings of Sneddon (2003b) and Sneddon et al. (2003a) indicate that fish might feel pain. It is typical of moral individualists to integrate such findings in their theoretical work. Once again, this is evidenced by Singer. At one point, he concludes with Mason: "We consider that Sneddon's work has, for all practical purposes, shown that fish do feel pain." (Singer and Mason 2006, 131) Moral individualists constantly adjust their opinion on what entities possess moral status in accordance with new empirical findings. Therefore, moral individualism proves to be realist on account of the importance it attributes to empirical facts and scientific methods.

This section was dedicated to exploring the roots of moral individualism in the philosophical tradition. I portrayed moral individualism as a methodological approach that pertains to analytic philosophy and is essentialist and realist in nature. In the next step, I examine the structure of the moral individualistic argument.

1.2.2. The structure of the moral individualistic argument

In animal ethics, the dominant essentialist approach to clarify concepts and the moral status of entities is called "moral individualism". This term was initially coined by James Rachels in 1990. Rachels affirms moral individualism's realist heritage in declaring himself "a Darwinian" (1999 [1990], 173) who builds his position on the theory of evolution. As such, he resolutely rejects the notion known as "anthropological difference" (Glock 2012; Wild 2006 and 2010, esp. 27 and 36f.) which assumes that the difference between humans and animals is a difference in *kind*. Rather, like the authors following the Darwinian tradition, Rachels insists that "there are only differences of degree" (1999, 174) between humans and animals. The reference to Darwin indicates that

moral individualism conceives itself to be closely intertwined with the natural sciences right from the outset. This raises the question what, then, moral individualism is. Rachels gives the following answer:

> Moral individualism is a thesis about the justification of judgements concerning how individuals may be treated. The basic idea is that how an individual may be treated is to be determined, not by considering his group memberships, but by considering his own particular characteristics. If A is to be treated differently from B, the justification must be in terms of A's individual characteristics and B's individual characteristics. Treating them differently cannot be justified by pointing out that one or the other is a member of some preferred group, not even the 'group' of human beings. (1999, 173f.)

In what follows, I explain moral individualism by means of Rachels' definition that is cited in the quote. According to Rachels, the central point of moral individualism is that certain properties decide upon how a particular human or non-human individual is to be treated by others. As such, it exhibits, at least, three important elements. First, moral individualism is, as its name suggests, an *individualist* theoretical stance in focusing on individuals: How a being is to be treated is deduced from her individual constitution, i.e. her possession of particular properties, and not from her membership to a certain group. As such, moral individualism is, second, *anti-speciesist* (Rachels 1999, 181ff.). Following Singer (2009 [1975], 9), the term "speciesism" denotes the (structural) discrimination of a being's interests simply on account of her species membership (Rachels 1999, 181). Third, moral individualism proves to be an *egalitarian view* that puts emphasis on the principle of equality. Rachels specifies this principle in the context of moral individualistic thinking as follows: "Individuals are to be treated in the same way unless there is a relevant difference between them that justifies a difference in treatment." (1999, 176) To clarify matters: Moral individualism does *not* translate the principle of equality into the equal treatment of individuals under any circumstances. Rather, individuals are to be treated alike if they possess relevant properties. Rachels (1999, 178) spells this point out by means of the notion of relevant differences: In his view, it depends upon the particular treatment whether a difference between beings legitimates treating them differently. A relevant difference is any property that serves as a valid explanation for the fact that a being possessing this property is legitimately treated in a certain way but not another being who lacks it (Rachels 1999, 181). According to Rachels, solely relevant differences justify treating individuals differently: "[W]here relevant differences between individuals exist, they may be treated differently; otherwise, the comparable interests of individuals, whether human or non-human, should be given comparable weight." (1999, 194) Other moral individualists like Singer

(2009, 2) and Francione (2008, 44) translate the principle of equality into the principle of equal consideration. Still, individuals are only to be treated equally if they resemble each other in possessing relevant properties. Singer emphasizes:

> If a being suffers there can be no moral justification for refusing to take that suffering into consideration. No matter what the nature of the being, the principle of equality requires that its suffering be counted [i.e. considered, E.T.] equally with the like suffering […] of any other being. If a being is not capable of suffering, or of experiencing enjoyment or happiness, there is nothing to be taken into account. (2009 [1975], 8)

In Singer's utilitarianist version of moral individualism, even the claim to equal consideration does not guarantee that individuals are to be treated alike. At times, the promotion of the common good justifies the violation of individuals' interests although they possess the relevant property of being sentient. However, moral individualists strongly disagree on this point. For instance, Regan's (2004 [1983]) abolitionist model of moral individualism insists that animals may not be used for any human purpose.

According to Grimm and Wild (2016, 50f.), the starting point of the moral individualistic argument is the existence of a moral community. Each member of this community possesses moral status and is owed direct moral duties. As such, one needs to be respected by others for one's own and not for others' sakes. Traditionally, the moral community has been considered to consist only of human members. The chief concern of moral individualism is the following: Referring to the principle of equality, it seeks to extend the moral community to (certain) animals on the basis of morally relevant similarities that these animals have with humans (Grimm and Wild 2016, 51f.). Thereby, so Grimm and Wild, moral individualists make use of what McReynolds describes as "*the extension model of moral standing*" (McReynolds 2004, 63). This model presupposes that each initial – i.e. human – member of the moral community possesses some "morally relevant" (McReynolds 2004, 64) essential property that justifies her moral status: "[T]he extension model begins with the following schema: trait T is the essential trait for moral standing. If being B possesses T (in sufficient amounts or degrees), B has moral standing. If being B lacks T, B lacks moral standing." (McReynolds 2004, 64) The human members of this group have moral status due to their possession of this specific property. Upon request, a "procedure of testing […] for trait T is applied" (McReynolds 2004, 64) to check whether another group of beings is also in possession of this property. If this is the case, the new group of beings resembles the first group in possessing the same morally relevant property. On account of its similarity with the initial group, the moral community is then extended to include the new group as well

(McReynolds 2004, 64). That is how the extension model of moral standing explains extensions of the moral community. From a different angle, Grimm has summarized the structure of the moral individualistic argument by breaking it down with a syllogism:

> P1: There is a describable property X that justifies in the realm of human morality that (certain) humans possess moral status.
> P2: The same property X can be found in a comparable way in (certain) animals.
> P3: Equal cases are to be treated alike, different cases are to be treated differently.
> C: Animals who are in possession of property X possess moral status. (2013, 55)[5]

Another common feature of moral individualistic thinking is that the essential properties referred to typically constitute what May labels a "capacity-based reason, or CBR" (2014, 156). A capacity-based reason is defined as a type of reason that draws on a particular morally relevant capacity of individuals (May 2014, 156). According to May, moral individualists primarily, but not exclusively, confer moral status and thereby extend the moral community by means of capacity-based reasons:

> It is because of the possession of one or more morally salient capacities [i.e. capacity-based reasons, E.T.] that a particular being enjoys a certain moral status, and must be treated in accordance with the obligations that arise for others on the basis of that status. (2014, 156)

Moral individualistic theories present materially differing essential properties. Prime examples are sentience (e.g. Francione 2008; Singer 2009 [1975]) and the criterion of being a subject-of-a-life (Regan 2004 [1983]). Notwithstanding all the differences, the notion of essential properties clearly testifies to moral individualism's realist heritage. The capacities constituting essential properties are typically attributed in light of empirical findings (Grimm and Aigner 2016, 34ff.; Grimm and Wild 2016, 56). Hence, moral individualists deduce essential properties from the joint biological constitution of humans and non-humans. That is why Rachels stresses that humans and animals solely differ in "degree" (1999, 174).

Grimm and Aigner (2016, 35f.) portray two further elements as common features of, at least traditional, moral individualism that are particularly elaborated in Singer's theory. The first element is the objectivity of moral judgements as it is explicated by Singer's

[5] This is my own translation of the following passage:
"P1: Es gibt eine beschreibbare Eigenschaft x, die in der zwischenmenschlichen Moral einen moralischen Status von (bestimmten) Menschen begründet.
P2: Diese Eigenschaft x lässt sich auch bei (bestimmten) Tieren vergleichbar feststellen.
P3: Gleiches ist gleich und Ungleiches ungleich zu behandeln.
C: Tiere mit der Eigenschaft x haben einen moralischen Status."

notion of “the point of view of the universe” (de Lazari-Radek and Singer 2014). In principle, the assumption of an impartial standpoint for reaching moral decisions is a common element of numerous ethical theories. Singer specifies this idea by the rationalistic notion of the point of view of the universe: Only by taking the impartial perspective of the universe, so Singer argues, it is guaranteed that agents pass objective judgements that are not contaminated by their own interests (Grimm and Aigner 2016, 35f; Grimm and Wild 2016, 59ff.). In moral individualism, such an impartial viewpoint typically fulfills two theoretical purposes: It allows, first, to determine which essential properties are morally relevant and, second, to identify which individuals possess these properties (Grimm and Wild 2016, 54f.). The second Singerian element that Grimm and Aigner (2016, 35f.) regard as a common feature of, at least traditional, moral individualism is closely linked with objectivity: It is the universality of moral judgements. Assuming that moral decisions are taken from an impartial point of view, Singer believes that all moral agents necessarily reach the same moral conclusions on what is permissible if they think long and well enough. Thus, according to Singer, moral judgements prove to be universal and are moral only if they are universal (Grimm and Aigner 2016, 35f.; Grimm and Wild 2016, 59ff.).

Another interesting aspect worth mentioning concerns how the extension of the moral community is justified. In this context, moral individualists frequently refer to a specific line of thought that is known as the “argument from marginal cases”. According to Anderson (2004, 279f.), it was first introduced by Dombrowski (1997). The argument compares the case of animals who are refused moral status due to lacking typically human attributes with the case of humans who possess moral status in spite of lacking the very same properties (Anderson 2004, 279f.). Traditionally, moral status has been connoted with typically human attributes like reason. As non-human animals lack the required traits, they were excluded from the moral community. The argument from marginal cases seizes on this point in rejecting the existence of any anthropological difference between humans and animals. In detail, it consists in the following steps of reasoning: First, it is stated that there is no typically human attribute that all humans possess. Just as animals, so-called human “marginal cases” like babies, comatose or the cognitive severely disabled clearly lack attributes as reason. Thus, they cannot be members of the moral community due to possessing typically human traits. Rather, it is argued that marginal cases are members of the moral community for being in possession of morally relevant capacities such as sentience. Closer inspection reveals

that certain animals resemble marginal cases in possessing these capacities as well. In spite of this striking similarity, both cases are treated differently: While marginal cases possess moral status and are, thus, considered integral members of the moral community, animals with the same capacities are denied the same status. At this point, moral individualists refer to the principle of equality and insist that both cases are to be treated alike. Obviously, there does not exist a morally relevant capacity that all humans have but all animals lack. So, on account of possessing morally relevant capacities, not only marginal cases but also certain animals have to be included in the moral community. Conversely, if animals are excluded from the moral community, then marginal cases have to be excluded as well. It is important to note that the argument from marginal cases does *not* seek to exclude human marginal cases from the moral community. Rather, moral individualists use this argument to justify the inclusion of all human as well as non-human individuals in the moral community who possess morally relevant essential properties (Crary 2010, 21f.).

The structure of the moral individualistic argument can be summarized as follows. In the first step, moral individualists identify a morally relevant essential property that confers moral status to individuals. They hold that all initial (human) members of the moral community have moral status due to possessing this property. Typically, the relevant essential property is a capacity or property of an individual like, for instance, sentience (capacity-based reason). In the second step, it is argued that not only humans but also certain animals possess this specific property. With reference to the principle of equality, moral individualists, third, insist that both cases are equal and, hence, have to be considered alike. On the basis of the specified morally relevant essential property, the moral community is, finally, extended to include all animals who possess the property in question. Therefore, at the heart of moral individualism lies an extension of the moral community on account of morally relevant essential properties of individuals. As moral individualism justifies moral status with reference to essential properties of individuals, it is an essentialist position.

1.3. Moral individualism in application

In this section, I present how the structure of the moral individualistic argument is applied to practical cases. Moral individualism takes a very specific form with regard to the conceptualization of “pets” and “companion animals”. Adhering to the essentialist tradition, pets and companion animals are conceptualized by analytic definitions. Moral

individualists define what a pet or a companion animal is by elaborating supposedly exhaustive lists of necessary and/or sufficient criteria. Each criterion is considered an essential property of the pet or companion animal and constitutes an individual capacity. To acquire the status of pet or companion animal, an individual has to fulfill the relevant criteria. As the elaborated lists serve as tools to ascertain whether an individual qualifies as a pet or companion animal, I call them "checklists".
In view of the wide range of suggested criteria and – to a lesser degree – criteriologies, I am compelled to limit my analysis of conceptualizations to a few selected examples. First, I portray Varner's (2002) criteriology for animal fellows as it is one of the most elaborated models and a central keystone of the debate. Afterwards, I present several exemplary criteria that are frequently discussed in the discourse.

1.3.1. Varner: a criteriology for animal fellows

In 2002, Varner developed a detailed criteriology for animal fellows in an article entitled "Pets, Companion Animals, and Domesticated Partners". By reproducing the two-step argumentation pattern that is common to applied ethics, he proves to be the most perfect moral individualist imaginable. Varner criticizes animal ethics for focusing on the clarification of animals' moral status, i.e. step one, while failing to deduce moral implications for pet animals, i.e. step two: "[P]hilosophers writing on the moral status of animals have so far [in 2002, E.T.] generally neglected conceptual and normative questions about pets, despite the evident importance of pets in many (indeed most) humans' daily lives." (2002, 473) In an effort to close this research gap, Varner seeks to add knowledge to the second step. Thus, his detailed clarification of relevant concepts is followed by the specification of concrete moral obligations towards pet animals. As my thesis solely addresses the first step of the argumentation pattern, my analysis is restricted to Varner's conceptual clarification.

1.3.1.1. Pets, companion animals and domesticated partners

Varner distinguishes the categories of pet, companion animal and domesticated partner. Each is defined by an own criteriology. The "pet" is the most elaborated category and is built upon the preliminary work of Barnbaum (1998). Varner derives the categories of companion animal and domesticated partner from the central category "pet" and further develops them. Thereby, a philosophical line of conceptualizing animal fellows evolves that originates from Barnbaum (1998) and is later taken up by Andreozzi (2013). As the other categories rest on the category of pet, companion animals and

domesticated partners constitute sub-categories of pets.

According to Barnbaum (1998), four criteria constitute the status of pet: The affection criterion, the domicile criterion, the dependency criterion and the discontinuity criterion. Barnbaum (1998, 41) considers three of them (affection, domicile, dependency) necessary and holds that all four criteria taken together are sufficient for being a pet. Except for a slight modification, Varner sticks to Barnbaum's criteriology. In principle, Varner regards all four criteria as necessary and, taken together, sufficient for the status of pet though they "may not be […] individually necessary and jointly sufficient" (2002, 455). As the category of pet lays the foundation of the other categories, this kind of thinking pervades his whole model. On account of the use of necessary and sufficient criteria, Barnbaum's (1998) and Varner's (2002) theories prove to be classical checklist approaches. As such, they are paragons of moral individualism.

Based on an animal's point of view, Varner structures the three categories hierarchically. The status of domesticated partner is ranked highest, followed by being a companion animal and, ranked lowest, being a pet (Varner 2002, 471). The categories are attributed different value as each status is linked with particular "benefits" (Varner 2002, 471) for the animal. In comparison, a domesticated partner benefits most from relations with humans while "a mere pet" (Varner 2002, 471) benefits least. What the benefits consist in follows from Varner's conceptualization of each category. As the category of pet is the foundation stone of the other two categories, I consider it first.

The category of pet

To explain Varner's (2002) criteriology for the pet, I first depict Barnbaum's (1998) initial model. In a random order, the first of the four criteria for being a pet is the **affection criterion**. According to Barnbaum (1998, 41f.), it requires affection on part of the owner towards the pet. Although the pet can reciprocate the affection in being attached to the owner, that does not need to be the case. The criterion also presupposes that the owner's *primary* purpose of keeping the pet is "feeling affection" (Barnbaum 1998, 41) for her. Varner (2002, 453 and 456) agrees, adding that affection for the pet does not have to be the *sole* purpose of keeping her. That is why "working animals, like draft horses and service dogs" (Varner 2002, 456) can also qualify as pets.

Second, there is the **dependency criterion**. Barnbaum explains it the following way: As a pet's own existence is "valuable to […] herself" (1998, 42), she has an "interest in her continued existence" (1998, 42). A necessary prerequisite for having this interest

is the pet's "survival instinct" (1998, 42) which, in turn, rests on the pet's "'being alive'" (1998, 42). The interest in the continuation of one's existence does not presuppose any self-consciousness. The crucial point of the dependency criterion is that the pet is "a dependent other" (Barnbaum 1998, 42) whose continued existence depends on the owner. So, the relationship between owner and pet is structured paternalistically. Due to lacking a survival instinct for not being alive, the Tamagotchi, the paper's paradigm case, lacks an interest in its continued existence and, thus, cannot be considered a pet (Barnbaum 1998, 42). As plants, on the other hand, strive towards the continuation of their existence, they qualify as pets: "It would probably be a mistake to say that my plants have a 'will to survive', but they do 'work' towards the 'goal' of survival. Thus, they are pets, albeit rather dull ones." (Barnbaum 1998, 42) Varner (2002, 454) agrees with the dependency criterion, deepening the notion of interests. According to Varner's view, "interest" is determined as "any *morally significant* need or desire" (2002, 454). Morally significant is an entity's need only if its fulfillment is intrinsically valuable, i.e. valuable for the entity herself. Morally not significant is an entity's need if its fulfillment is instrumentally valuable, i.e. not valuable for the entity herself but for someone else. In this context, Varner gives the example of artefacts like a car or a Tamagotchi. Although a car has certain "needs" to function properly, they are morally not significant. The fulfillment of the car's needs is not valuable for the car itself, i.e. intrinsically, but rather for the one who uses it, i.e. instrumentally. Thus, entities in lack of morally significant needs are not interested in the continuation of their own existence. Varner concludes: "To have interests, a thing must have a good of its own which makes the world a better place when life goes well for it […]." (2002, 454)

The third criterion is the **discontinuity criterion**. Following Barnbaum, the status of pet requires that the lives of the pet and the owner differ "in kind" (1998, 42) in terms of quality and not solely in degree in terms of "quantity" (1998, 42). Nevertheless, the experiences of the owner are not considered more valuable than those of the pet. Barnbaum adds three remarks on the criterion: First, human children do not qualify as pets as their life solely differs in quantity from adults'.[6] Second, it is in principle possible that humans become pets of some alien species. Third, individuals belonging to a species that approximately differs in degree from humans, like chimpanzees, can and

[6] Interestingly, there is also the opposite trend that owners perceive their animal fellows as their children (e.g. Greenebaum 2004; Shir-Vertesh 2012; Turner 2001).

should not be pets. Varner (2002, 453) also agrees with this criterion, especially highlighting its inherent anti-speciesist moment.

The last of the four criteria is the **domicile criterion**. According to Barnbaum (1998, 42), it requires that the pet lives with her owner in the owner's sphere of life. That does not only include having the same physical living space but also sharing, for instance, certain behavioral norms. Consequently, many pets lead "'unnatural lives'" (Barnbaum 1998, 42) for being integrated in a living environment that is not their own. Varner (2002, 453) agrees with this criterion, stressing that pets are actively kept by their owners.

Taken together, Barnbaum (1998, 41) considers the four criteria defined above sufficient for the status of pet. So, a being is a pet if she fulfills all four criteria. Based on her criteriology, Barnbaum argues that the group of pets includes innumerable animals like her cat (1998, 43) and plants (1998, 42). By contrast, Barnbaum excludes human children (1998, 42), inanimate artefacts like the Tamagotchi (1998, 43) and animals closely resembling humans like chimpanzees (1998, 43) from the group of pets.

In principle, Varner (2002) agrees with Barnbaum's criteriology. What bothers him is Barnbaum's finding that plants qualify as pets. Varner regards this as a counterintuitive consequence as plants lack a thorough ability of autonomous and intentional movement: "[P]lants cannot *move*, in the sense of voluntarily deciding to go, nor does it make sense to speak of holding them captive." (2002, 454) Therefore, considering plants pets "sounds like a category mistake" (2002, 454) albeit one that "is not literally a category mistake" (2002, 455) in terms of being "a misuse of the term" (2002, 455) "pet". Still, Varner believes that action is needed. In his eyes, the most effective strategy for excluding plants from the group of pets is specifying Barnbaum's initial domicile criterion. Varner's "modified domicile criterion" (2002, 454) narrows the fact of "living with the owner" down in two respects: First, it necessitates that the living environment of the pet is under the owner's "control or influence" (2002, 454). Second, it requires that pets are "prevented from leaving […] or voluntarily choose to remain" (Varner 2002, 454) in this space. According to Varner's criteriology, a being is a pet if she fulfills this modification together with Barnbaum's other three initial criteria: "A *pet* is any entity which meets the affection, discontinuity, dependence [sic! – i.e. dependency, E.T.] and modified domicile criteria." (Varner 2002, 262) Typical examples of pets include domestic – i.e. not wild – animals like cats, dogs, birds and fish (Varner 2002, 455). Varner (2002, 458 and 460) identifies two benefits that follow from the status of pet: First,

pets receive affection of the owner and, second, they are being cared for.

The category of companion animal

Second, there is the category of companion animal (Varner 2002, 460ff.). Frequently, "companion animal" is used as "politically correct" (Varner 2002, 460) alternative to the term "pet", assuming that both concepts have the same scope. By contrast, Varner defines the companion animal as a sub-category of pet. What distinguishes the companion animal from a "mere pet" (Varner 2002, 463) is reciprocal companionship. In Varner's view, reciprocity is the key to the status of companion animal as he regards companionship essentially as "a two-way street" (2002, 460). The requirement of reciprocity presupposes a voluntary choice on part of the animal to establish and maintain the corresponding relationship with a human. Apart from the affection and care received as a pet, the companion animal benefits from the depth of the relations with humans that she evidently enjoys. The paradigmatic case of a companion animal is the cat (Varner 2002, 460). According to Varner, a being is a companion animal if she fulfills the four criteria for the status of pet (affection, dependency, discontinuity, modified domicile) and additionally meets the criterion of reciprocal companionship: "A *companion animal* is a pet who receives the affection and care owners typically give to pets, but who also has significant social interaction with its owner and would voluntarily choose to stay with the owner, in part for the sake of the companionship." (2002, 463)

The category of domesticated partner

Varner (2002, 458ff.) depicts the category of domesticated partner as the second subcategory of pet. Thus, a being needs to fulfill the four criteria for the status of pet to become a domesticated partner. The differentia specifica of the domesticated partner is that she works voluntarily with humans in a manner that complies with what is common to her own nature. The paradigmatic example is a working dog like an assistance dog: "Dogs working 'at liberty,' and in ways that emphasize and exercise the animal's mental and/or physical faculties in a healthy and satisfying way (for the dog), are the paradigm case of what I call *domesticated partners*." (Varner 2002, 458) Varner characterizes the relationship between domesticated partners and humans as a "partnership" (2002, 458) that is made use of for particular human purposes. It is of crucial importance that both parties perceive these working relations as an enriching experience. Humans benefit by achieving certain ends. Benefits for the domesticated partner

include, in addition to the affection and care she gets as a pet, that she is allowed to realize her full potential in a "natural […] and healthy" (Varner 2002, 458) way. In this respect, the domesticated partner has a privilege that the pet – by being integrated in an alien sphere of life – is denied. According to Varner's criteriology, a being is a domesticated partner if she fulfills the affection, dependency, discontinuity, modified domicile and cooperative working criterion: "A *domesticated partner* is a companion animal who works with humans in ways that emphasize and exercise the pet's mental and/or physical faculties in a healthy way." (2002, 463)

Although the latter quote substantiates my interpretation of the domesticated partner, it reveals a contradiction in Varner's conceptualization: In the quote, Varner refers to the category of companion animal to explain what a domestic partner is although he has not done so before. Later in the text, Varner repeats this line of argument: "Thus a domesticated partner gets all the benefits of being a companion animal, and then some, and a companion animal gets all the benefits of being a mere pet, and then some." (2002, 471) Consequently, it appears as if Varner considers the domesticated partner not only a sub-category of pet, but also a specific sub-category of companion animal. According to this view, all domesticated partners would be pets as well as companion animals without exception. All companion animals, on the other hand, would be pets but not all of them would be domesticated partners. This interpretation is supported by the fact that Varner ranks the status of domesticated partner highest of all three categories. Downgrading the status of companion animal, Varner emphasizes that the relationship with companion animals is "much less sophisticated" (2002, 460) than the working relations with domesticated partners. However, there are two weighty reasons against this thesis: First, the explanation of the domesticated partner precedes that of the companion animal in the text. Second, Varner neither draws on the companion animal in describing the domesticated partner nor mentions the domesticated partner in portraying the companion animal. Hence, it remains unclear whether the category of domesticated partner presupposes not only the status of pet but also the status of companion animal.

1.3.1.2. Inconsistencies and critique

In conclusion, I present three points of criticism of Varner's criteriology for animal fellows. First, Varner's conceptualization entails counterintuitive consequences for the group of marginal cases that consists in "profoundly retarded human beings" (2002,

453): With reference to Barnbaum's (1998) criteriology, Varner (2002, 453) notices that these humans fulfill all four criteria for the status of pet. After all, as a moral individualist Varner refuses to accept the property of being human as a morally relevant difference that justifies different treatment. Nevertheless, Varner refuses to take a stand on the issue whether severely retarded humans actually qualify as pets: "But since nothing of substance regarding non-human pets hangs on this question, I leave it unanswered here." (2002, 453) It remains unclear whether Varner considers his modification of the domicile criterion a solution for this unresolved issue. In my opinion, Varner's specification does not rule out the possibility that at least some severely retarded humans fulfill the domicile criterion. In severe cases, caring for a retarded person may quite possibly require restricting her freedom of movement. In other cases, retarded humans might stay on voluntary terms to receive care. Thus, on the basis of Varner's criteriology at least some severely retarded humans qualify as pets. This is a deeply counter-intuitive conclusion: Unlike animal fellows, these humans are cared for with the sole purpose of fulfilling their needs. Moreover, they are clearly not "kept" like animal fellows are. Obviously, Varner's criteriology is too broad: Like Barnbaum's model, it includes entities in the group of pets who are no pets.

Second, Varner presents a contradictory argument for the existence of non-conscious pets on the basis of Barnbaum's dependency criterion. Barnbaum argues that the possession of interests presupposes having a survival instinct which, in turn, depends on being alive. If a being fulfills this criterion, then the continuation of her existence is valuable to herself. Varner (2002, 455f.) implies that conscious as well as non-conscious entities fulfill this requirement. Thus, Varner argues that the group of pets comprises conscious as well as non-conscious beings. However, it is not clear how a non-conscious being could value the continuation of her own existence. After all, it only applies to conscious beings that "what happens to them matters to them" (Regan 2004, xvi). So, even if a non-conscious being possesses survival instincts, she is not capable of valuing the continuation of her existence. Hence, Varner's case for the existence of non-conscious pets is flawed.

Third, Varner's criteriology for the pet is accompanied by a serious amount of vagueness in terms of ascertaining which beings qualify as pets. For instance, Varner (2002, 455) critically examines whether the fish living in one's garden pond can be considered one's pets. With regard to such cases, Varner admits that his criteriology "might seem to imply the wrong thing in some cases" (2002, 455). Also, he acknowledges that his

criteria do not apply to all cases as they “may not be, strictly speaking, individually necessary and jointly sufficient” (Varner 2002, 455). Trying to alleviate the problem, Varner ultimately resorts to Wittgenstein’s notion of family resemblance. Although his criteriology fails to pose a guide to every possible case, it fulfills the purpose of determining “a ‘family resemblance’ among paradigm examples of pets” (Varner 2002, 455). Varner’s last resort to family resemblance indicates that an alternative Wittgensteinian approach could be more promising to distinguish animal fellows than moral individualism.

1.3.2. Exemplary criteria for pets and companion animals

In the last step, I exemplified by Varner (2002) what form a comprehensive criteriology for pets and companion animals can take. In the following, I discuss several exemplary criteria that are commonly associated with pets and companion animals in the discourse. Each can be construed as an essential property of pets or companion animals. So, moral individualists can employ every single criterion in elaborating analytic definitions of the pet and the companion animal. It has to be mentioned first that most of the authors I refer to relate the respective criteria to the category of pet. Frequently, the terms “pet” and “companion animal” are not distinguished but rather used interchangeably. I point out relevant exceptions. In this section, I solely seek to demonstrate that pets and companion animals are defined by a wide range of criteria. Thus, the lack of conceptual clarity does not pose a problem for my argument.

In one form or another, the criteria already dealt with are widely supported in the debate. To cite just a few examples, the core idea of the *domicile criterion* can be found in Bok (2011, 769), DeMello (2012, 149), Diamond (1978, 469), Grier (2020, 292), Overall (2017b, xviii) and Pierce (2020, 316). The *dependency* on humans is explicitly acknowledged, for instance, by Bok (2011, 771), Grier (2020, 292), Milligan (2009, 405), Overall (2017b, xix), Palmer and Kasperbauer (forth.), du Toit (2016, 335) as well as Yeates and Savulescu (2017, 348). *Discontinuity* is hardly shared but returns as the altered criterion that a pet needs to be **kept by an individual of a different species**. For instance, this criterion is mentioned by DeMello (2012, 146): She associates it with observations of animals who keep animals of other species as pets like the famous case of the gorilla Koko and her cat All Ball. *Affection*, on the other hand, is a universal criterion that pervades to a certain degree all contributions on the matter. Often, dis-

cussions on affection center on accompanying notions like reciprocity and companionship/friendship. In view of these subdivisions, it can be seen that plenty of the criteria for becoming a pet or a companion animal are interconnected.

The central criterion of **reciprocity** requires that not only the human but also the animal makes a material contribution to the joint interactions. Sandøe et al. explain that reciprocity "involves humans and animals recognising and responding to one another as specific individuals" (2016, 5). Versions of this criterion are endorsed, for instance, by DeMello (2012, 155) as well as Yeates and Savulescu (2017, 349). Corresponding with Varner (2002), several authors identify reciprocity as the key feature of companion animals that distinguishes them from pets (e.g. Palmer and Kasperbauer forth.; Sandøe et al. 2016, 6). Another vital criterion for the status of pet or companion animal is **companionship/friendship**. According to common interpretations, it necessitates that the relation between an animal and a human constitutes a sincere companionship/friendship (e.g. Bok 2011, 769; DeMello 2012, 149 and 155; Overall 2017b, xxiii; Pierce 2020, 317; Serpell 2019, 17; Yeates and Savulescu 2017, 350). Closely connected is the criterion of **personality**. It assumes at least two different forms. First, personality is required in terms of individuality. Commentators explain this version of the criterion as follows: To qualify as a pet or companion animal, an animal needs to be addressed as an individual by a human (e.g. DeMello 2012, 155; Grier 2020, 292; Sandøe et al. 2016, 5). As such, the animal cannot simply be replaced by another individual. Second, the animal's personality is invoked in terms of being akin to a person. In this context, commentators observe that the pet is conceived as a being with "'person-like' status" (DeMello 2012, 157), who "is given some part of the character of a person" (Diamond 1978, 469) or possesses "quasi-personhood" (Pierce 2020, 317).

At times, loosely connected criteria for pets and companion animals build structures that resemble a criteriology. Such a collection of criteria is presented by the historian Thomas (1984 [1983]). His model enjoys great popularity and is frequently referred to in the academic discourse (e.g. DeMello 2012, 148; Grier 2006, 7; Sandøe et al. 2016, 4). Examining the history of pet keeping, Thomas distinguishes three criteria for the status of pet. The first criterion is a variant of the domicile criterion: It holds that the pet "was allowed into the house" (Thomas 1984, 112). Second, Thomas states that a pet "was given an individual personal name" (1984, 113). The criterion that pets are **given a name** is still advocated by several commentators (e.g. Barnbaum 1998, 41; DeMello 2012, 148f.; Diamond 1978, 469). Naming a pet is closely interwoven with the criterion

of **verbal communication**. According to this criterion, becoming a pet presupposes that humans speak with a being in a special way. Diamond (1978, 469) observes that humans' verbal communication with pets takes a specific form that differs from the way animals are usually spoken to. DeMello specifies that the human-pet communication resembles forms of speaking with "family and friends" (2012, 149) and even our verbal communication with babies (2012, 156). She points out that this special form of verbal communication is made possible in the first place by giving the pet a name: "Naming an animal incorporates him or her into the human social world and allows us to use their name as a term of address and a term of reference." (DeMello 2012, 148f.) By being given a name, the pet can be addressed directly as well as being spoken about, thus laying the foundations for social relations (DeMello 2012, 149). Thomas' third criterion is that "the pet was never eaten" (1984, 115). He attributes this fact to humans' relation with pets: "It was not because of their [pets', E.T.] taste, but because of their close relationship to human society that such animals were not consumed." (Thomas 1984, 115) The criterion that a pet is **not eaten** is commonly adopted in the discourse (e.g. Barnbaum 1998, 41; Diamond 1978, 469; Overall 2017b, xviiif.). Take, for instance, the position of Diamond: "[P]eople who ate their pets would not have pets in the same sense of that term. […] A pet is not something to eat […]." (1978, 469) This criterion is also confirmed by empirical findings. Serpell (1996, 64ff.) as well as Serpell and Paul (2003, 129f.) describe the keeping of pets as a common practice in tribal peoples and hunting societies. Often, the animals chosen as pets are members of an animal species that the humans usually kill for food. Although animals of the same species are consumed, there is a powerful "taboo" (Serpell 1996, 67; Serpell and Paul 2003, 130) to eat the individuals considered pets.

Serpell provides another collection of loosely connected criteria that centers around considerations on usefulness. In this context, pets and companion animals are defined on the basis of the use, function or purpose they have for humans. According to Serpell and Paul, the term "pet" refers to a being who does not primarily serve "economic purposes" (2003, 129) or "practical services" (2003, 129). Rather, Serpell and Paul stress that pets "are kept primarily for social or emotional reasons" (2003, 129) like fulfilling humans' "social and emotional needs" (2003, 129). Serpell (2019,17) divides the generic category of pet into various sub-categories, each distinguished by the primary purpose of the respective group of pets. Companion animals constitute the first sub-category of pets. Companion animals are pets whose "primary function […] is to

provide their owners with social support or 'companionship'" (Serpell 2019, 17). According to Serpell, further categories consist in pets with the primary function of "ornamental purposes" (2019, 17), "status symbols" (2019, 17), "entertainment […] and/or […] hobbies" (2019, 17) as well as being "working animals" (2019, 17). Serpell admits that these pets can also be human companions. However, as this is not the primary function of these pets, they do not qualify as companion animals (Serpell 2019, 17). In sum, the criterion of **usefulness** requires that a being has the primary function of relationship for humans. Although pets and companion animals might have accompanying practical or economic use, this is not the *primary* purpose of these animals. Versions of this criterion are mentioned, for instance, by DeMello (2012, 146f. and 155), Grier (2020, 292) and Pierce (2020, 316).

Finally, I consider various individual criteria that are not systemized in any way. A common candidate is the criterion of **property status**. As a matter of fact, animals possess the legal status of human property in almost all parts of the world. Possible exceptions are tribal peoples, hunter societies and the like. In the discourse, this fact is a widespread subject of debate and criticism. Notwithstanding, it is frequently recognized that the status of pet and companion animal is linked with being someone's property (e.g. Andreozzi 2013, 27f.; Bok 2011, 775ff.; Milligan 2009, 403ff.; Palmer and Kasperbauer forth.; du Toit 2016, 332; Yeates and Savulescu 2017, 352).

A complementary criterion is that of **domination**. The core idea underlying all variants of this criterion is that humans considerably control and interfere with the lives and interests of pets and companion animals. This is observed by authors like, for instance, Andreozzi (2013, 28 and 30) who refers to a classic of Tuan (1984, 99), Grier (2020, 292), Irvine and Cilia (2017, 2), Overall (2017b, xixff.) as well as Palmer and Kasperbauer (forth.). Domination is primarily coupled with power: Humans actively exercise power over pets and companion animals who are in the position to submit to humans' will. By commentators this constellation has also been described as "a power-relationship" (Yeates and Savulescu 2017, 348) and "a power differential between pets and those who keep pets" (Barnbaum 1998, 41). For that reason, humans and animal fellows have what Bok describes as an "asymmetrical relationship" (2011, 771). Human domination concerns countless spheres of pets' and companion animals' lives. To name just a few, I cite a very apt passage of Irvine and Cilia: "We [humans, E.T.] control their [animal fellows, E.T.] movement, their access to outdoors, when and what they

eat, and when they defecate and urinate." (2017, 2) Another major field of human domination concerns the preservation of animals' health and handling of disease (Bok 2011, 771). Humans also control animals' basic need of reproduction in at least two respects: On the one hand, humans prevent pet and companion animals from procreating (Andreozzi 2013, 30). On the other hand, humans actively breed certain pets and companion animals (DeMello 2012, 162ff.; Yeates and Savulescu 2017, 352). Frequently, the produced individuals belong to selected breeds. Yeates and Savulescu (2017, 351f.) draw attention to the fact that breeding standards often fulfill a specific function. For instance, the neotenic appearance of certain breeds might be designed to satisfy "a human need to be needed, to nurture and to love" (Yeates and Savulescu 2017, 351). This phenomenon has been studied, for instance, by Serpell (e.g. 1996, 75ff.; 2002). It is not uncommon that the breeding standards humans regard as aesthetically appealing are detrimental to animals' health and welfare (DeMello 2012, 165; Serpell 2002). Moreover, selective breeding has reinforced animals' dependency on humans in such a manner that it increasingly becomes an irreversible necessity of animals' bodily constitution:

> Although dependency has been bred into domestic animals since the earliest days of domestication, it has accelerated in recent years with the production of animals such as Chihuahuas that are physically and temperamentally unsuited for survival outside of the most sheltered of environments. (DeMello 2012, 165)

Apart from breeding, humans also exert influence over animals' appearance by performing cosmetic surgical procedures like ear cropping, tail docking and declawing (DeMello 2012, 165). On the whole, humans intervene in animal fellows' lives in manifold ways. Although human domination is a subject of heated debate and criticism in the scientific discourse, it is frequently associated with the status of pet and companion animal.

Closely linked to domination are the criteria of being **domesticated**, **tame** and **captivated**. Commentators report that the pet or companion animal is defined as a being who is domesticated (e.g. DeMello 2012, 149; Eddy 2003, 100; Serpell 2019, 17), tame (e.g. Blouin 2012, 858; DeMello 2012, 149; Eddy 2003, 101) or kept in captivity (e.g. Serpell 2019, 17).

These requirements refer to the criterion of being **deliberately acquired**. According to this criterion, becoming a pet or companion animal presupposes the voluntary decision or willingness on part of the owner to take a being in and care for her. Authors touching

on this point include, for instance, Andreozzi (2013, 26), Bok (2011, 769), DeMello (2012, 147), Grier (2020, 292) and Overall (2017b, xxiii).

Pets' and companion animals' deliberate acquisition directly attaches to the criterion of **variable status**. Its central point is that the status of pet or companion animal depends on external factors related to relations with the owner. If the owner breaks these relations off, for instance by abandoning the animal, the animal loses her status as pet or companion animal. Eddy observes that, as a consequence, "animals can be both pets and non-pets at different points in their lives depending on the whim of their owners" (2003, 102). Such a view is, at least implicitly, endorsed, for instance, by Barnbaum (1998, 41), Grier (2020, 292), Overall (2017b, xxiif.) as well as Rollin and Rollin (2003, 110).

To conclude, moral individualistic thinking determines the concept of pet and companion animal by means of analytic definitions. These definitions consist in checklists that list necessary and/or sufficient criteria a being has to fulfill to qualify as a pet or a companion animal. Each criterion constitutes a capacity of an individual and is considered a property that specifies pets' or companion animals' common essence. In drawing up checklists, moral individualists can choose from a wide range of criteria.

1.4. The deficiencies of moral individualistic approaches

In this section, I consider deficiencies that accompany the moral individualistic method of conceptualizing "pets" and "companion animals". In detail, I elaborate four points of criticism. First, I stress that the criteria moral individualists typically employ to define pets and companion animals are essentially relational. Second, I argue that the elaborated checklists cannot fulfill the promise of exhaustiveness. Third, I highlight the importance of social practices with regard to humans' interactions with fellow animals. Finally, I demonstrate that pets and companion animals are socially constructed.

1.4.1. Relationalism

In the context of structural matters, I have pointed out that moral individualism makes use of capacity-based reasons to justify moral status. The notion of capacity-based reasons is coined by May (2014) who defines it as a type of reason that rests on the capacities of an individual. Its counterpart is the notion of "relation-based reason, or RBR" (May 2014, 156). Relation-based reasons are characterized as a type of reason that refers to an individual's relations with (members of) the moral community (May

2014, 156f.). So, the basic idea is that relation-based reasons draw on the relations an individual has with others. To develop my first point of criticism, I classify the presented criteria for the status of pet and companion animal with May's distinction between capacity-based and relation-based reasons. I argue that the application of May's categories uncovers the fact that moral individualists confuse the nature of – at least most of – the criteria they put forward to determine what a pet or a companion animal is. Contrary to what is common to moral individualistic theories, the criteria strictly speaking do not qualify as capacities of individuals. Rather, I demonstrate that the criteria for the status of pet or companion animal are based on an individual's relations with others. My analysis is summarized in Figure 1. However, first I have to account for using capacity-based and relation-based reasons as ontological categories. After all, May (2014) has initially introduced these concepts to justify moral status. In general, essentialist theories focus on the first step of the argumentation pattern that is typical of applied ethics: They specify properties in order to clarify some kind of status, usually the ontological status of an entity. Moral individualism is a specific type of essentialist theory that refers to properties to clarify entities' *moral* status. In this context, May (2014, 156f.) presents capacity-based and, to a far lesser degree, relation-based reasons as types of reasons moral individualists use to justify moral status. Notwithstanding, the moral individualistic justification of moral status still presupposes the clarification of an entity's ontological status: It is inherent in moral individualism's logic that we first need to determine the properties of an entity – i.e. her ontological status – to be able to confer moral status upon her. Only if the entity in question actually possesses certain morally relevant properties, we are required to apply the principle of equality and, consequently, grant her moral status. This argumentation pattern also governs the moral individualistic discourse on defining and distinguishing pets and companion animals. In view of the fact that the ascription of moral status presupposes the clarification of an entity's ontological status, I use capacity-based and relation-based reasons as ontological categories to distinguish pets and companion animals.

There is no doubt that some imaginable criteria for the status of pet or companion animal constitute genuine capacities in terms of being traits or properties of individuals. With reference to the criteria presented in the third section, this applies, at least, to *discontinuity*, *domicile*, being *kept by an individual of a different species*, *property status* and being *domesticated*, *tame* or *captivated*. Evidently, facts like living with an

owner, being legal property and being domesticated or tame can be considered properties of individuals. Thus, these criteria prove to be capacity-based criteria.

Clearly, numerous imaginable criteria for the status of pet or companion animal are of a different kind. They do not describe capacities but rather build on an individual's relations and interactions with others. With regard to the discussed criteria, this includes, at least, *affection*, *dependency*, *reciprocity*, *companionship/friendship*, *personality*, *given a name*, *verbal communication*, *not eaten*, *usefulness*, *domination*, *deliberately acquired* and *variable status*. It goes without saying that an individual can only develop each of these properties in the context of relating to and interacting with others. For instance, one does not have a name qua birth but only on account of being given a name by someone. Also, the fact of being dominated presupposes someone who continuously exercises control and power over another being. For that reason, these criteria constitute relation-based criteria.

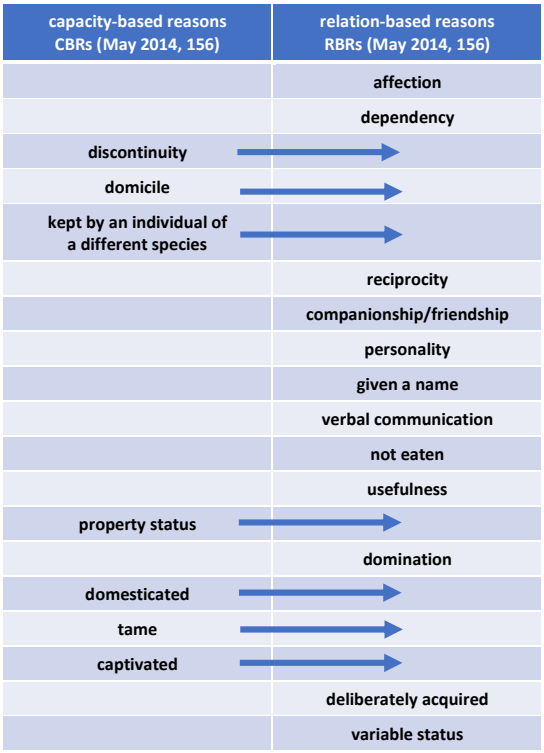

Figure 1: The criteria for the status of pet and companion animal are either relation-based criteria or capacity-based criteria transient to relation-based criteria, i.e. relation-based criteria in disguise.

However, closer inspection reveals that the same argument can be put forward with respect to the aforementioned capacity-based criteria. That concerns discontinuity, domicile, being kept by an individual of a different species, property status and being domesticated, tame or captivated. As a matter of fact, each of these properties ultimately refers at some point to an interacting other who has ongoing relations with the pet or companion animal. The trait of being someone's legal property (property status)

demands the ongoing existence of someone whose property the pet or companion animal is. Likewise, living with an owner (domicile) and being kept by an individual of a different species depict processes that depend on the ongoing existence of another being. In the same vein, the property of being domesticated, tame or captivated presupposes that the pet or companion animal (species) has once been domesticated, tamed or captivated by someone. Even the requirement of having a different kind of life (discontinuity) refers to a relation that necessitates the existence of a distinct other. Thus, it can be concluded that – at least most of the – allegedly capacity-based criteria are transient to relation-based criteria. As such, capacity-based criteria constitute relation-based criteria in disguise.

I admit that I have drawn the border between capacity-based and relation-based criteria for the status of pet and companion animal somewhat randomly. For instance, it could be argued that criteria like dependency or not being eaten have to be classified as capacity-based criteria and, thus, relation-based criteria in disguise. Nevertheless, my central point of criticism remains valid: All of the presented criteria and presumably most, if not all, imaginable criteria for the status of pet or companion animal are essentially relational. This thesis is also explicitly endorsed by May: He exemplifies the category of relation-based reason by the paradigmatic case of “pets, who are adopted into the human community” (2014, 157).

This point of criticism can be sharpened by Denby’s (2014) variant of distinguishing intrinsic and extrinsic properties. Robertson and Atkins (2016) introduce Denby’s (2014) distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic properties as a specification of the basic distinction between essential and accidental properties. Intrinsic properties clarify the notion of essential properties whereas extrinsic properties illuminate what accidental properties are. What lies at the heart of this distinction is a separation of an entity’s relational and non-relational properties. While intrinsic properties denote the non-relational properties of an entity, extrinsic properties refer to her relational properties: “Roughly, an intrinsic property is a property that an object possesses *in isolation*, while an extrinsic property is a property that an object possesses *only in relation to other objects*.” (Robertson and Atkins 2016) Although Denby puts it slightly different, the core idea remains the same. Intrinsic properties are non-relational properties:

> Roughly, a property is intrinsic iff [sic!, E.T.] its instantiation is insensitive to the state or nature of anything other than its instances; otherwise, it is extrinsic.[…] Whether something is red, or 3 kg, or round is a matter of how it itself is, regardless of anything else. So redness, *being* 3 kg, and roundness are intrinsic properties. (Denby 2014, 91)

Extrinsic properties, on the other hand, are defined as an entity's relational properties: "[W]hether something is alone in the universe, or coexists with something red, or is a meter from the wall does depend on how other things are, so *being alone*, *coexisting with something red*, and *being a meter from the wall* are extrinsic properties." (Denby 2014, 91) On the basis of the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic properties, I specify my first point of criticism as follows: Moral individualists attempt to determine the status of pet and companion animal with the aid of criteria that rest on the pet's and companion animal's intrinsic properties. These attempts are doomed to fail as the pet and the companion animal can only be defined by means of criteria that draw on pets' and companion animals' extrinsic, i.e. relational, properties.[7]

1.4.2. Lack of exhaustiveness

Second, I criticize that moral individualistic conceptualizations of "pets" and "companion animals" lack the exhaustiveness they aspire. The lack of exhaustiveness has, at least, four facets. Whereas the first addresses current developments of checklists, the other facets concern the method of using checklists per se.

The first facet relates to *inclusiveness*. Take for instance the line of conceptualizing "pets" that originates from Barnbaum (1998): Barnbaum's criteriology is motivated by the opinion that the use of the term "pet" lacks exhaustiveness in common parlance for being too inclusive. According to common usage, the Tamagotchi qualifies as "a virtual pet" (Barnbaum 1998, 41) but still a pet. As Barnbaum deems this a counterintuitive use of the term "pet", she elaborates a checklist for the status of pet to exclude Tamagotchis from the group of pets. Likewise, Varner (2002) criticizes Barnbaum's (1998) criteriology for being too inclusive in conferring the status of pet to plants. He modifies Barnbaum's initial checklist to exclude plants from the group of pets. The very same point of criticism can be directed at Varner's theory: It is too inclusive in allowing that at least some severely retarded humans are considered pets. Hence, another modification of the checklist for the status of pet is indicated to exclude severely retarded

[7] Actually, resort to relationalism is (considered) a common strategy to counter essentialist thinking in the social sciences. At least, that includes, in part implicitly, the following areas of interdisciplinary research: The main topic of conceptualizing pets and companion animals (e.g. Burgess-Jackson 2002; Hart 2003; Rollin and Rollin 2003; Sanders 2003; Wrye 2009; Yeates and Savulescu 2017), the formation and criticism of theories in animal ethics (e.g. Coeckelbergh and Gunkel 2014; Midgley 1998 [1983]; Palmer 2010), theorizing moral status ascription (e.g. Coeckelbergh 2012) as well as certain branches of feminism (Koggel 2012, 357), posthumanism (Loh 2018, 150) and family research (Irvine and Cilia 2017, 4).

humans from the group of pets. However, such specification risks the inclusion of other non-pet beings to the group of pets which would, in turn, call for further modification and so on. In sum, efforts to clarify moral individualistic theories frequently tend to make matters worse by exposing additional complicating details. On the whole, moral individualistic checklists for the status of pets and companion animals lack exhaustiveness for having been too inclusive.

Second, the lack of exhaustiveness regards *vagueness*. This point is illustrated by Varner's (2002) theory. Although he deems his conceptualization appropriate, Varner (2002, 455) comes across a grey area in deciding whether certain animals like fish living in one's garden pond qualify as pets. So, the use of necessary and/or sufficient criteria for the status of pet and companion animal cannot completely clear up vagueness. Serpell's (2019) distinction between companion animals and other categories of pets faces the same difficulty. Subsequent to introducing his – allegedly exhaustive – conceptualization, Serpell chooses to use the terms synonymously on account of its inherent vagueness: "For the purposes of the present discussion, the terms 'companion animals' and 'pets' will be used interchangeably, thereby acknowledging that the distinctions between them are sometimes vague." (2019, 17) It suggests itself that the resulting vagueness can be attributed to the method of drawing up a criteriology. Therefore, as the use of any criteriology necessarily involves a certain amount of vagueness, moral individualistic checklists for the status of pet and companion animal lack exhaustiveness.

The third aspect concerns the exhaustiveness of complete checklists. Armstrong et al. (1983) argue that the *definition of any concept surpasses the addition of all the features it possesses*. This is demonstrated by means of the concept "bird": "The simple fact is that a bird is not a sum of features […]. All the features in the world that are characteristic of and common to all birds don't make a bird – that is, not unless these properties are held together in a bird structure." (Armstrong et al. 1983, 303) The checklists moral individualists draw up to define the pet and the companion animal solely aim at listing all essential properties these entities possess. As this method is *in principle* not suited to define concepts, moral individualistic approaches inevitably lack exhaustiveness.

The fourth element refers to the structure of social life. Dewey (2008b [1922], 164ff.) prominently reflects on the supremacy of universal principles in ethics. According to Dewey, it is commonly assumed that each moral problem can be solved by the application of universal principles. Dewey attributes the quest for such hard criteria to the

human need for certainty and security in philosophizing as well as in life: “[I]n morals a hankering for certainty, born of timidity and nourished by love of authoritative prestige, has led to the idea that absence of immutably fixed and universally applicable ready-made principles is equivalent to moral chaos.” (2008b, 164) Elaborating fixed ethical criteria feels like driving in pegs that serve the purpose of gaining control over social life. However, control is restricted: Dewey (2008b, 165) characterizes the social as a sphere of constant change. Consequently, fixed moral principles that are capable of guiding any imaginable past and future case simply cannot exist. As the scope of moral principles is directed at particular socio-historic contexts, traditional principles fail to guide altered social situations. For that reason, Dewey calls for the “continuous, vital readaptation” (2008b, 165) of moral principles. The aim of such modification is to guarantee “that they [moral principles, E.T.] will be more effectual instruments in judging new cases” (Dewey 2008b, 165). The same holds true for the conceptualization of “pets” and “companion animals”: In view of the fact that the respective criteria are essentially relational, they are not set in stone but are particularly sensitive to changes in social life. In conclusion, as the criteria for the status of pet and companion animal are affected by social change, moral individualists’ rigid checklists unavoidably lack exhaustiveness. Resulting from the failure to ensure methodological exhaustiveness, moral individualists are continuously casted back to the very uncertainty they seek to evade.

1.4.3. Embeddedness in social practices

Third, I criticize that moral individualists neglect the fact that the relational criteria they include in their checklists are embedded in certain practices. This argument is substantiated by Serpell’s (1996) observations on the way humans interact with animal fellows. Take, for instance, the following passage:

> In economic terms the majority [of pets, E.T.] are completely useless. Yet we allow them the *run of our houses*, *give them personal names*, and treat *them as honorary members of the family*. We *stroke them*, *cuddle them*, *play with them*, *groom them* and ensure that they *receive all the exercise and social contact they need* to keep them happy and healthy. They are regularly *supplied with specially prepared, vitamin-enriched food, provided with warm and comfortable places to sleep*, and at the first signs of illness, are *immediately taken to* expensive and highly trained *doctors*. And when they eventually expire, they are *mourned like departed loved ones*, even to the extent of being *buried with full ceremonial honours*. (Serpell 1996, 14; emphases added)

To cite another example, Serpell also notes:

> [S]tudies have shown that the vast majority of western pet-owners *regard their pets as members of the family*; that they *talk to them*, *share their meals with them*, *allow them to sleep on the bed, and to sit on the furniture*, and even *celebrate their birthdays*.[…] And, very occasionally, people do appear to display genuinely *greater affection for their animals than for their own offspring*. (1996, 74; emphases added)

Both reports contain numerous criteria for the status of pet or companion animal. Some were presented in the third section like being given a name or variants of the domicile and dependency criterion. Others like being considered an integral member of the family or being paid last respects have not been discussed so far. The criteria Serpell specifies do not compose a checklist but are loosely collected. The thick descriptions of what it is like to keep animal fellows paint a picture of a rule-governed activity that displays a high level of complexity. Indeed, Serpell presents the keeping of animal fellows as distinct social practices that are dependent upon specific historic and cultural contexts. That is why he explicitly refers at one point to “the human practice of keeping animals for companionship” (Serpell 1996, 147). However, it can be read from the passage quoted above that the criteria Serpell mentions characterize the contemporary western practice of keeping animal fellows. Elsewhere, the practices of interacting with animal fellows might differ.

My argument that the criteria for the status of pet and companion animal are embedded in social practices can be further elaborated with the aid of Diamond (1978; 1991). Serpell considers social interactions with animal fellows distinctively *human* practices. Diamond would subscribe to this: In her approach, the “specialness” (1991, 352) and “significance” (1991, 352) of human life plays a key role. First and foremost, leading a human life is of central importance as it is a basic requirement for having moral obligations to other human and non-human beings. Essentially, Diamond seeks to protect “the source of moral life” (1978, 471). Grimm and Wild (2016, 152) notice that she thereby defends the anthropological difference. Diamond holds:

> [I]f we […] obliterate the distinction between human beings and animals and […] speak or think of ‘different species of animals’, there is no footing left from which to tell us what we ought to do, because it is not members of one among species of animals that have moral obligations to anything. The moral expectations of other human beings demand something of me as other than an animal […]. (1978, 478)

The relevant notion of human life is clearly not an empirical one. There are numerous striking similarities between humans and animals, for instance in terms of shared socio-cognitive behavior. Therefore, the anthropological difference cannot be fed by the

natural sciences (Diamond 1978, 470). Rather, the significant notion of human life is attached to the social dimension of being human. It relates to the fact that humans create meaning:

> We can, for example, ask what human beings have *made* of the difference between human beings and animals. A difference like that may indeed start out as a biological difference, but it becomes something for human thought through being taken up and made something *of* – by generations of human beings, in their practices, their art, their literature, their religion, their ethics. This is true of any difference. (Diamond 1991, 350f.)

What distinguishes human life is the social construction of meaning that finds expression in social practices. These practices govern how we treat human and non-human others and also have repercussions upon the common understanding of human life. For instance, Diamond holds that the practice of "our not eating each other" (1978, 469) is "one of the things which go to build our notion of human beings" (1978, 470).

It is of crucial importance that the establishment of countless social practices precedes our birth. In order to lead a human life and become full members of human society, we are trained as children to partake in common social practices. Diamond illustrates this point by the aforementioned practice of eating animals: "We learn what a human being is in – among other ways – sitting at a table where WE eat THEM. We are around the table and they are on it." (1978, 470) Human interactions with animal fellows are also governed by social practices (Diamond 1991, 351). These practices exhibit a multitude of rules that convey a certain meaning of what an animal fellow is. For instance, one of these rules constructs the animal fellow as a non-eatable entity which is obviously a relational property. In practice, animal fellows are simply not eaten. That is why Diamond explicates that "people who ate their pets would not have pets in the same sense of that term" (1978, 469).

However, Diamond's crucial point is the following: On account of socialization, social practices necessarily preform human perception, action and thinking pre-reflectively at any time. She demonstrates this thesis by animal experimentation. Experimenting on laboratory animals is a specific practice of perceiving and treating animals as resources for human use. At its core lies the justification of the intentional infliction of harm on animals for the benefit of scientific progress. Once the practice with its supposedly worthwhile ends becomes internalized, most humans perceive the use of laboratory animals "as delicate instruments" (Diamond 1991, 339) as normal and legitimate. That is simply how animals are treated in the scientific context. On account of internalizing this practice, few humans come to question the ways laboratory animals

are treated: “It is possible for humane men to set apart the area of experimentation as one in which one simply cannot bring in the sorts of consideration that play a role in judging how animals are treated outside that area.” (Diamond 1991, 355) Thus, social practices always preform humans’ perception, action and judgement pre-reflectively. The fact that humans may question common practices indicates that social practices are not set in stone but are open to criticism and transformation (Diamond 1991, 348). With reference to humans’ entanglement in social practices, Diamond also rejects moral individualism’s realist understanding of objective moral judgements. Objectivity, so Diamond believes, does not refer to an impartial or agent-neutral “view from nowhere” (Nagel 1986) that allows for discovering objective judgements and independently existing empirical facts in the world. Rather, social practices preform and thereby form at any time the way humans perceive reality. This also has repercussions on our understanding of objectivity: Objectivity is itself determined by social practices. So, the impartial perspective proclaimed by moral individualists is a human construction that is trained and internalized throughout socialization. Therefore, what qualifies as objective moral judgements proves to be predetermined by the practices humans commonly perform:

> [W]e are never confronted merely with the existence of ‘beings’ with discoverable empirical similarities and differences, towards which we must act, with the aid of general principles about beings with such-and-such properties deserving so-and-so. […] Far from it being the case that we have moral principles which can be given in purely general terms, and which are then applied in a world of empirically given similarities and differences, what differences there are *for us in our thought* is a matter created in part by past moral thought, marking and making something with human sense of such things as male/female, human/non-human. (Diamond 1991, 351f.)

Consequently, moral individualists only deem certain capacities morally salient on the condition that these have been attributed moral relevance before (Grimm and Aigner 2016, 40). Diamond’s idea of implicit moral resources that lie at the heart of common practice is also the core of Crary’s notion of an “ethical orientation” (2010, 26 and esp. 31ff.) in human life. With her slogan “minding what already matters” (2010), Crary tries to raise awareness for the hidden but highly active resources that pre-reflectively constitute meaning.

1.4.4. The social construction of pets and companion animals

My final point of criticism attaches to Diamond’s observation that humans construct meaning. I argue that moral individualists fail to see that pets and companion animals

are socially constructed by humans. In this context, I refer to the sociologist Wrye who holds "that there is no essential 'petness' to anything and that it is a social construction" (2009, 1035). That is why Wrye believes that "we must take a constructionist approach to understanding pet relations" (2009, 1037). As Wrye develops such a social constructionist account herself, I explore first what social constructionism is.

Baghramian and Carter provide the following definition of social constructionism:

> Social constructionism is a particularly radical form of conceptual relativism with implications for our understanding of the methodology and subject matter of the sciences. […] Reality – with its objects, entities, properties and categories – is not simply 'out there' to be discovered only by empirical investigation or observation; rather, it is constructed through a variety of norm-governed socially sanctioned cognitive activities such as interpretation, description, manipulation of data, etc. (2015)

So, the central assumption of social constructionism is that reality is essentially created by humans. Social constructionism has inherited from relativism the moment of relativity to certain standards of assessment like social norms (Baghramian and Carter 2015). For that reason, relativism and all its variants including social constructionism agree with Diamond that there simply can be no view from nowhere, such as a "framework-independent vantage point" (Baghramian and Carter 2015). In denying the existence of an independent reality, social constructionism rejects the central premise of the realist tradition (Baghramian and Carter 2015). As such, it is also opposed to all variants of realism as, for instance, essentialism and, with it, essentialist theories like moral individualism. This genealogy is also depicted in Figure 2.

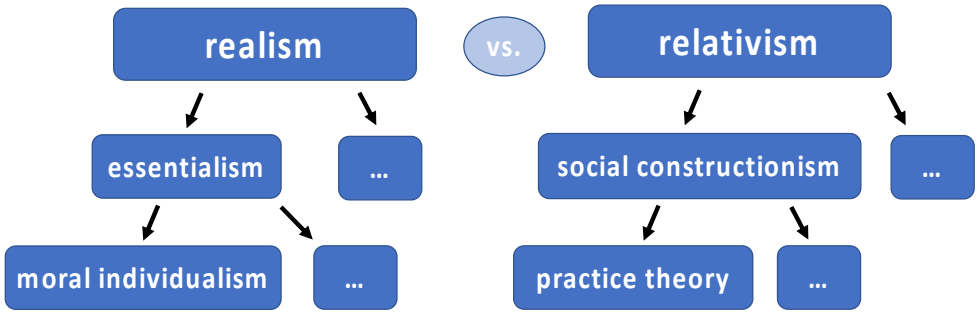

Figure 2: A genealogy of social constructionism and opposed theoretical frames.

Social constructionist thinking has become a driving force in the social sciences and has also entered the debate on animal fellows. In the last few years, the status of animal fellow is increasingly perceived as a human construct. For instance, Pierce characterizes the pet as "a socially constructed category" (2020, 316). Grier regards human-animal fellowship as a collection of social practices: "[D]aily life with pets is shaped by a set of widely agreed-on practices that reflect both longstanding custom

and evolving ideas." (2020, 293)[8] Also, DeMello questions "how animals are socially constructed" (2012, 147). DeMello stresses that the animals considered animal fellows "have been chosen by humans and turned into pets" (2012, 147). This begs the question of *how* humans constitute a being as an animal fellow. Wrye (2009) provides an illuminating answer to this question that I explain in what follows.

Although Wrye (2009, 1058) does not discern a relevant difference between the concepts of pet and companion animal, she speaks about pets. Consequently, her considerations that uncover a structure inherent in human interaction with pets apply to all types of animal fellows. Wrye argues that an entity does not become a pet or any other kind of animal fellow due to possessing relevant properties as essentialists try to make us believe. Rather, an entity is constituted as an animal fellow on the basis of a specific relation that humans[9] have with her. For that reason, moral individualistic definitions of the different categories of animal fellow are doomed to fail, achieving, at best, non-exhaustive and vague results. After all, the criteria incorporated in these checklists refer to intrinsic, i.e. essential properties of the *individual herself*. However, Wrye emphasizes that individual pets do not possess any essential properties that justify their ontological status as pets:

> Pets have no essential characteristics and they are solely created by humans' view and conduct toward them. This is likely the reason there is no agreed upon definition of what makes an animal a pet – there are simply too many traits that both pets and nonpets possess. (2009, 1043)

The fact that an endless number of properties pertains to animal fellows also explains why I could only present a non-exhaustive, exemplary set in the third section. Wrye proceeds that there are also no properties that all and solely extensions of the "pet" exhibit. An entity can even be a pet or any other type of animal fellow without fulfilling any of the properties that are commonly associated with this status (Wrye 2009, 1045). Therefore, Wrye concludes that the pet as such "can't be classified" (2009, 1043).

According to Wrye, two elements are of particular importance to constitute animal fellow-constituting relations. First, the relation presupposes that the human is emotionally attached to the entity in question: "[P]ets are a product of the investment of human emotion into objects […]." (Wrye 2009, 1035) What matters in this respect to acquire

[8] Unfortunately, Grier (2020) and Pierce (2020) ultimately fall back into the moral individualistic habit of elaborating a checklist for the status of pet.

[9] Though focusing on the human role in pethood, Wrye (2009, 1058) does not rule out the possibility of pet-constituting relations between non-human animals.

the status of animal fellow is “the human dimension of feeling” (Wrye 2009, 1056). Second, the relation necessitates the performance of particular actions on part of the human that concern the entity in question: Entities “become pets by virtue of humans granting them, through various actions, such status” (Wrye 2009, 1036). By the example of virtual pets, Wrye brings out central keystones of the human-pet relation: Referring to relevant literature, she holds that the relation rests fundamentally on “interactivity” (2009, 1049). Also, human and pet are mutually “responsive” (Wrye 2009, 1049) to one another and are “co-constituted” (Wrye 2009, 1051) in their joint interaction. Provided that a relation of the relevant sort exists, Wrye (2009, 1059) believes that artificial entities also qualify as pets.[10] Therefore, she argues that in order to become an animal fellow, an entity has to be related to and treated as an animal fellow by a human: “Entities are pets if they are experienced as pets.” (Wrye 2009, 1059)

However, the crucial point of Wrye’s theory on human-animal fellowship is the following. The human emotions and actions required to constitute animal fellow-constituting relations are framed, bundled and structured by social practices. Wrye presents this argument against the backdrop of her criticism towards essentialist attempts to define pets: “Inevitably, the problem with trying to characterize or classify pets, *per se*, is that we miss the critical point that they can’t be classified. We can only outline the practices that constitute entities and relationships.” (2009, 1043) Social practices determine *which* emotions and actions humans need to invest to constitute a relation that constitutes an entity as an animal fellow. By humans’ performance of particular social practices, entities become animal fellows. Thus, the crux of Wrye’s account is that animal fellows are socially constructed by humans in the performance of social practices. Thereby, the social construction of animal fellows takes two distinct forms. First, it concerns the construction of the notion of animal fellow by the creation of practices that establish animal fellow-constituting relations. Second, it refers to the actual act of constituting an individual entity as an animal fellow. Wryre admits that the focus on the human side of relations instead of an entity’s properties inevitably renders discussions on the status of animal fellow anthropocentric. She holds: “I find myself challenged to find another way to talk about petness in terms that are, at the same time, neither

[10] In this respect, there is a wide gulf between Wrye’s (2009) and Barnbaum’s (1998) views. I do not want to go deeper into the subject of whether artificial machines qualify as pets or companions like certain animals do. The crucial point of my thesis is that the status of pet or companion depends on social interactions that are regulated by distinct social practices. I deem it possible that different entities are made pets or companions by *different* social practices. That is why I do not take a stance on the issue whether artificial machines or plants can become pets or companions.

essentialist nor anthropocentric. To my mind, the former is possible while the latter is not […].” (Wrye 2009, 1057)

In this section, I demonstrated four deficiencies of the moral individualistic method to draw a distinction between pets and companion animals. In the final step, I synthesize my criticism to uncover what kind of methodological approach is required to distinguish pets and companion animals appropriately.

1.5. Synthesis: towards a practice-oriented approach

Hitherto, I depicted moral individualism as an essentialist theoretical frame that is used in the field of animal ethics to clarify entities’ moral status. It ascribes moral status to individual entities on the basis of certain intrinsic capacities these entities possess. In the discourse on animal fellows, moral individualistic thinking assumes a distinct form: Moral individualists draw up checklists of necessary and/or sufficient criteria to define the status of pet and companion animal. Each criterion draws on a particular intrinsic capacity that is considered an essential property of the pet or companion animal. Examples include the following criteria: The pet or companion animal is dependent, lives with the owner, has a name, is not eaten and takes part in reciprocal interactions with a human that constitute sincere companionships or friendships.

I highlighted four deficiencies of the moral individualistic method to define and, subsequently, distinguish pets and companion animals. First, at least most of the allegedly capacity-based, i.e. intrinsic, criteria prove to be relation-based, i.e. extrinsic, criteria or, at least, relation-based criteria in disguise. Second, due to methodological reasons the elaborated checklists necessarily lack exhaustiveness. Third, moral individualistic criteria are embedded in social practices. And finally, humans socially construct pets and companion animals by the performance of contingent social practices. In sum, my criticism of moral individualism indicates that the distinction of pets and companion animals requires an alternative methodological approach. This approach needs to take the relational, i.e. extrinsic, nature of the relevant criteria as well as the importance of social practices into account. Rather than listing pets’ and companion animals’ intrinsic properties, pethood and companionship have to be acknowledged as closely resembling but distinct social practices. Therefore, the research question of my master’s thesis can be formulated as follows: *How can pets and companion animals be distinguished in a practice-oriented way?*

In an effort to cope with the lack of clarity and vagueness that accompany his criteriology, Varner (2002) himself points the direction for such an alternative approach. Resorting to Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance, Varner claims that his theory narrows down a "family" of classical pet animals: "[T]he four criteria discussed above characterize a 'family resemblance' among paradigm examples of pets (domestic[…] dogs and cats, caged birds and fish, and horses or agricultural animals who are treated like pets) […]." (2002, 455) I follow this path Varner has cleared. In the remaining part of my thesis, I distinguish pets and companion animals based on an understanding of social practices that is inspired by the later Wittgenstein. As this is but one of several paths to take social practices seriously, I develop a *Wittgensteinian* practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals. So, in next chapter, I demonstrate that pethood and companionship are structurally resembling social practices. In the last part, I analyze pethood and companionship materially and finally draw a distinction between pets and companion animals. Rather than focusing on pets' and companion animals' intrinsic properties, my distinction refers to exemplary extrinsic properties that characterize the corresponding social practices of pethood and companionship.

At this point, it could be objected that my Wittgensteinian practice-approach does not make much of a difference compared to moral individualism. For instance, Crary observes that moral individualists employ either "*intrinsic*" (2010, 21) properties or "*relational* characteristics" (2010, 21) of individuals to confer moral status. Consequently, my practice-approach could be interpreted moral individualistically. If we consider a relation a property of an individual, then the practice-approach solely replaces an individual's intrinsic capacities by her relational properties. Thus, the practice-approach would conform to moral individualistic thinking:

> The introduction of such relational characteristics does not, however, represent a sea change in the thought of moral individualists. The thinkers who insists on talking about them resemble other moral individualists in holding that only intrinsic characteristics endow a creature with 'moral status' in virtue of which it is a source of agent-neutral reasons.[…] (Crary 2010, 21)

To clarify the difference between moral individualism and my practice-oriented approach, I classify both methods with Armstrong et al. (1983). This is also depicted in Figure 3. First of all, both methods constitute what Armstrong et al. call "feature theories" (1983, 265). Such theories regard concepts like "pet" or "companion animal" as mental categories that are composed of "simpler mental categories […] usually called *features*, *properties*, or *attributes*" (Armstrong et al. 1983, 265). Due to focusing on

properties, moral individualism and my practice-approach are feature theories. Armstrong et al. divide feature theories into two sub-categories. Moral individualism pertains to the definitional view that is described as follows: "[A] smallish set of the simple properties are individually necessary and severally sufficient to pick out all and only, say, the birds, from everything else in the world." (Armstrong et al. 1983, 267) As moral individualism specifies necessary and/or sufficient criteria to draw up checklists for the use of concepts, it pertains to the definitional view. My practice-approach, on the other hand, belongs to what Armstrong et al. refer to as the category of "*prototype* or cluster concept view" (1983, 267). At the heart of the prototype view lies Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance. It presupposes that the extensions of a concept are unified by a family of similar features that are neither necessary nor sufficient individually: "[*G*]*ame* was a cluster concept, held together by a variety of gamey attributes, only some of which are instantiated by any one game." (Armstrong et al. 1983, 269) As I introduce pethood and companionship as family resemblance concepts in the next chapter, my approach is a prototype view. With respect to the prototype view, Armstrong et al. further distinguish a holistic interpretation and a decompositional interpretation that is "featurally in particular" (1983, 270). I distinguish pets and companion animals by exemplary features of the social practices of pethood and companionship. Therefore, my practice-approach is a decompositional and featural prototype view on feature theory.

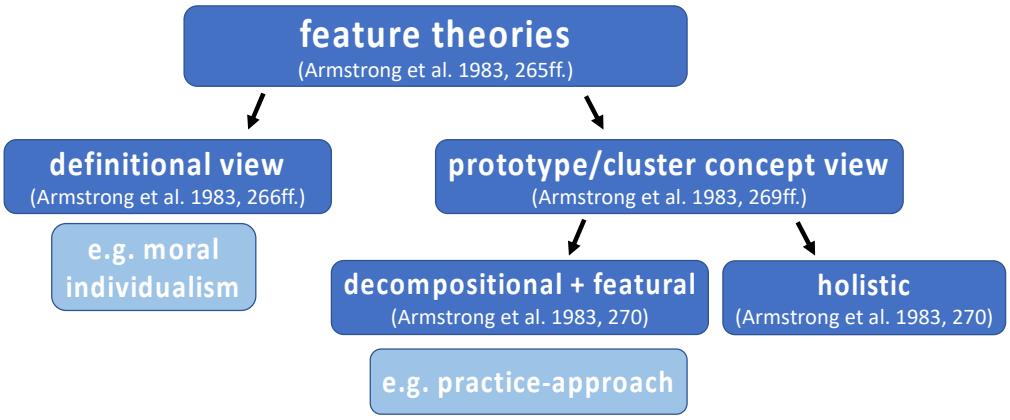

Figure 3: A classification of the moral individualistic approach and the practice-sensitive approach to the distinction of pets and companion animals.

This classification explains why moral individualism and my practice-sensitive approach to the distinction of pets and companion animals solely differ in degree: First of all, as both approaches are feature theories, they naturally focus on properties. Whereas moral individualism draws on the intrinsic properties of the pet and the com-

panion animal herself, my approach refers to exemplary extrinsic properties of the corresponding social practices. Moreover, by dividing the object of investigation into the simple elements of individual properties, both approaches conduct a decompositional form of analysis. So, on account of applying analytic methods, moral individualism as well as my practice-approach qualify as analytic philosophy. This argument can be supported with Glock (2004) who considers Wittgenstein an analytic philosopher in all phases of his work: As my distinction draws on and applies central ideas of the later Wittgenstein, the same holds true for my approach. Therefore, with regard to structural aspects, the moral individualistic and my practice-oriented methodological approach solely differ slightly.

Notwithstanding the striking similarities, there is a crucial difference between both approaches. In contrast to moral individualism, my practice-sensitive approach constitutes a prototype view. As such, it abandons essentialism and the claim to exhaustiveness in terms of using necessary and/or sufficient criteria that are inherent in moral individualism. Accordingly, the properties of pethood and companionship used to distinguish pets and companion animals neither refer to a common essence of these social practices. Nor are the listed properties considered necessary and/or sufficient criteria that define pethood and companionship exhaustively if taken together. By focusing on the social practices that guide human relations with animal fellows rather than animal fellows themselves, my approach attaches to Wrye's (2009) theory. Wrye solely seeks to uncover the methodological foundation that a material characterization of human relations with animal fellows presupposes: "This essay is not an examination of the nature or characteristics of petness and I will not attempt to identify the criteria for classifying this relation. My aim here is more modest but […] an important starting point for those who might take on those projects." (2009, 1036) By specifying exemplary material properties of the practices that regulate these interactions, I take on the task of characterizing properties of human relations with animal fellows. Thus, my practice-sensitive approach elaborates Wrye's account of petness.

2. The concept of social practices: an analysis

The central point of the first chapter is that humans socially construct pets and companion animals by the performance of social practices. The moral individualistic approach is doomed to fail as it explains pets and companion animals by the pet's and companion animal's intrinsic properties. By contrast, I have argued that the distinction between pets and companion animals calls for a practice-sensitive methodological approach that draws on the notion of social practices. In what follows, I demonstrate that the theoretical frame of practice theory provides the required methodological resources to develop such an account. This chapter is dedicated to the clarification of central concepts that underlie the practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals that I draw in the final chapter. In this part of my thesis, I aim at demonstrating that pethood and companionship need to be acknowledged as structurally resembling social practices. For that purpose, I elaborate a working definition of practice theory's key concepts, of a Wittgensteinian understanding of social practices and of the notion of family resemblance as presented by Wittgenstein. Each of these concepts has a specific function for the justification of the thesis that pethood and companionship constitute structurally resembling practices. In this respect, my approach attaches to the later Wittgenstein who uses an analogy with tools to explain the use of concepts. Like the tools in a toolbox, so Wittgenstein holds, each concept has a particular function: "Think of the tools in a toolbox: there is a hammer, pliers, a saw, a screwdriver, a rule, a glue-pot, glue, nails and screws. – The functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects." (2009, §11)[11] As the concepts I specify serve a specific function, I refer to literature that is suited to substantiate my argument. In this chapter, my primary sources are Davide Nicolini (2013), Theodore Schatzki (2008 [1996]) and the later Wittgenstein (2009 [1953]). For the purpose of portraying the heterogenous and complex frame of practice theory, I regard Nicolini's (2013) introduction on the subject as a useful tool. Schatzki (2008), on the other hand, has developed a specifically Wittgensteinian account of practice theory. Based on my analysis of Schatzki's (2008) theory, I seek to illustrate the structure of a Wittgensteinian understanding of pethood and companionship as social practices. The discussion of Wittgenstein's (2009) notion of family resemblance, however, serves the purpose of explicating the

[11] "Denk an die Werkzeuge in einem Werkzeugkasten: es ist da ein Hammer, eine Zange, eine Säge, ein Schraubenzieher, ein Maßstab, ein Leimtopf, Leim, Nägel und Schrauben. – So verschieden die Funktionen dieser Gegenstände, so verschieden sind die Funktionen der Wörter." (2016a, §11)

concept of resemblance that is relevant for my practice-sensitive distinction between pets and companion animals.

What concerns the structure of this chapter, I confirm in four steps that pethood and companionship are structurally resembling social practices. In the first step, I examine the central notion of social practice and key concepts that relate to practice theory. In the second step, I analyze Schatzki's (2008) Wittgensteinian notion of social practice. In the third step, I consider how Wittgenstein (2009) depicts family resemblance. Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance also builds my starting point in the third chapter, where I explore the *material* similarities and differences between pethood and companionship. However, prior to considering material resemblances, I synthesize, in the fourth step, the findings of my preceding analysis. There, I explain why pethood and companionship constitute structurally resembling practices.

2.1. "Practice" in practice theory: clarifying concepts

I begin my analysis of the notion of social practice by defining it. Often, this notion is entangled with concepts like "praxis", "practice theory" and "praxeology". In the following, I clarify these related and sometimes confused concepts to delimit the notion of social practice that is relevant for my purpose.

2.1.1. What is "practice"?

"Practice" is the key concept of practice theory (Stern 2003, 185), a framework that is part of the social sciences. In common parlance, the term "practice" can be used synonymously with *praxis* (Schrag 1999, 731) and, as such, denotes the activity of living a human life in reality (Wildfeuer 2011, 1775). Following the Aristotelian tradition, practice became contrasted with theory (Nicolini 2013, 28; Schrag 1999, 731). Practice theory, on the other hand, focuses on another, very specific meaning of practice. To gain a comprehensive understanding of it, I offer three different versions of how practice can be defined in general terms in practice theory. The first definition stems from Schatzki. Schatzki holds that most practice theorists agree on the view that "practices are arrays of human activity" (2005, 11). So, practices consist of numerous individual actions that humans perform. Consequently, the study of practices comprises the entirety resp. "the total nexus of interconnected human practices" (Schatzki 2005, 11). Evidently, practice theory places strong emphasis on human agency. This premise is

criticized by the comparatively small branch of posthumanist practice theory: Posthumanism influences practice theory at least to acknowledge the constitutive role and crucial relations of non-human entities with regard to human practices and the social (Schatzki 2005, 11 and 19ff.). Second, Stern defines practices as "something people do […] on a regular basis" (2003, 186) and whose "identity […] depends […] also on the significance of those actions and the surroundings in which they occur" (2003, 186). Once again, practices are depicted as human activities. Further, they are characterized as obtaining regularity and carrying a certain meaning that is somehow connected with the context in which they are performed. The third and most complex of the three definitions can be found in Nicolini's (2013) introduction to practice theory. He defines practices as follows:

> Among practice theorists there is, in fact, a certain consensus that practices (in the plural) are historically and geographically recurring localized occurrences. […] There is also a consensus that practices are molar units; that is, they are complex wholes composed of other 'smaller' elements – for example, bodily motions and simpler actions. Practices are thus configurations of actions which carry a specific meaning: moving a hand forward is thus not a practice but can become a component of the practice of 'greeting by shaking hands'. (Nicolini 2013, 10)

Of importance are, at least, three aspects: First, *regularity* is confirmed as an essential characteristic of practices. Second, it is highlighted that practices are *historically and culturally contingent* phenomena. As such, they are open to change. Third, it is affirmed that practices are constituted by the purposeful *connection* of various simple actions that confers meaning. In general terms, I summarize the core notion of practice that practice theory is concerned with as follows: *A practice is the composition of numerous simple actions performed by (a) human(s) that are unified by aiming at some end and thereby confer meaning to the overall activity*. As practices depend on specific historical and cultural contexts, they are changeable.

2.1.2. What is "practice theory"?

After clarifying the notion of practice, I settle the understanding of practice theory that is relevant for my argument. Practice theory is a theoretical approach that explains social phenomena by focusing on individual practices (Nicolini 2013, 9; Schatzki 2005, 22; Stern 2003, 185). It is an interdisciplinary field that gathers scholars not only from the humanities and social sciences – like philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists and cultural theorists – but also from science and technology studies (Schatzki 2005,

10; Stern 2003, 186). Concerning the formation of the practice approach, it has to be remarked that practice has long been a neglected subject of discussion. While being a topic of interest in ancient times, especially for Aristoteles, practice has only recently reentered the scientific discourse at the end of the 1970ies (Nicoloni 2013, 23ff.). With regard to the growing interest in the study of practices, Schatzki et al. announced in 2001 a “practice turn in contemporary theory” (2005 [2001]). Other commentators have endorsed this expression to denote the aforementioned developments (e.g. Stern 2003). However, a certain degree of unclarity remains among scholars about who is to be labelled a practice theorist and how practice theory is to be conceived (Stern 2003, 186). Considering practice theory’s conception of itself and its objectives, the question is posed whether analyzing (the performance of) practices in lived reality by *theorizing* is a contradiction in terms. Reproaches of this kind can be rejected for practice theorists have a specific understanding in mind when referring to their approaches as “theories”. For instance, Schatzki provides a minimum definition that perceives a theory as a “general and abstract account” (2005, 12). According to Stern, a theory is “any general or systematic way of approaching a given subject matter” (2003, 187). In this respect, practice theory “includes such activities as providing models, offering exemplary studies of particular cases, developing conceptual frameworks or categories, or providing a genealogy” (Stern 2003, 187). Practice theory explicitly turns down the notion of theory that shimmers through the arguments of moral individualism: Building abstract hypotheses – i.e. principles – by generalization that are used for explaining and predicting phenomena (Schatzki 2005, 13; Stern 2003, 187). In summary, practice theory encourages an alternative kind of thinking: It focuses on specific contexts and cases in explaining social phenomena and desists from the conviction that one can provide exhaustive explanations of the world by means of formal principles.

It is of crucial importance to note that there is nothing like a “unified practice approach” (Schatzki 2005, 11). The theories subsumed under the practice paradigm do not exhibit “one inherent common feature” (Nicolini 2013, 214) but possess highly heterogenous traits. What links them is a shared interest in certain research objects and a similar way of analyzing them. Thus, Nicolini depicts all practice theories in Wittgensteinian terminology as members of one family that “share a series of family resemblances” (2013, 9). As such, practice theories “comprise a complicated network of similarities and dissimilarities” (Nicolini 2013, 9). Thereby, Nicolini anticipates the central notion of family resemblance (concepts) that is analyzed in the third section. Consequently, the

exact definition and constituents of practices depend on the respective theories and can differ considerably (Nicolini 2013, 10). The same applies to the methodology used by the differing accounts: It consists in “several overlapping clusters of loosely connected and ambiguous terms […] that lead in a number of different directions” (Stern 2003, 186).

Despite their differences, the individual practice theories do not coexist in isolation. Given the plurality of theories, Nicolini (2013, 10) points out two possible courses of action: First, one could merge all theories into a practice-supertheory to explain each social phenomenon with one and the same theory. This is the path chosen by moral individualistic thinkers: Their theories are designed to be as reduced as possible to explain numerous phenomena likewise. However, in Nicolini’s view this strategy amounts to a “betrayal of the ethos” (2013, 10) of practice theories for they “strive to provide a thicker, not thinner, description of everyday life” (2013, 9). By reducing the complexity of methodological tools, one narrows the focus on complex social phenomena and, thus, weakens the explanatory power of the given arguments. Instead, Nicolini encourages the plurality of practice theory by “an appreciation of difference” (2013, 10). In particular, Nicolini advocates a “toolkit approach” (2013, 11): He compares practice theory to a toolbox that offers differing theories as methodological tools. In analyzing social phenomena, one must apply a combination of the theories most suitable for examining the research object in question.

Although practice theory cannot be considered a coherent theoretical frame, the differing theories share several characteristics. In what follows, I present five common features of practice theories that are identified by Nicolini (2013, 3ff.). However, the features are not solely repeated but synthesized and complemented by further information where helpful to improve understanding. First, Nicolini (2013, 3) points out that practice theories *focus on practices* and – it might be added – “the context” (Stern 2003, 185) in which practices are embedded. So, attention is shifted away from “practitioners” (Nicolini 2013, 7), i.e. the acting human subjects, towards the performance of particular activities and the circumstances that are associated with them. Practice theory is a “relational” (Nicolini 2013, 3) theoretical approach that conceives the social world as being produced by a nexus of numerous practices. Strong emphasis is placed on the fact that the social is produced and maintained by activity. Practice theories reflect the dynamic nature of the social and are, thus, “fundamentally processual” (Nicolini 2013, 3): The practices that constitute the social are not fixed entities but changeable and

depend on historical and cultural contexts. Yet, bringing a change of practices about is challenging. As practices are internalized, they are usually not questioned and can even be regarded "as part of the 'natural' order of things" (Nicolini 2013, 3). In this context, Nicolini describes practice theory as a constant reminder of the fact that the social is not given but produced and in occasional need for change: "It [practice theory, E.T.] also suggests that social structures are temporal effects that can always break down, be taken down, or collapse if and when the plug is pulled." (2013, 3) What is more is that theorizing about practices cannot be reduced to a pure description of practices. Practice theories employ "a performative perspective to offer a new vista on the social world" (Nicolini 2013, 7). Thus, by doing practice theory one does not only adopt an alternative point of viewing social phenomena but also alters them.

Expressed pointedly, the second[12] common feature of practice theory can be summarized as follows: Certain *"capacities"* (Schatzki 2005, 16) *of individual agent's* play an important role for practice theorists. Nicolini states that performing practices necessitates "adapting to new circumstances" (2013, 5) and is, thus, "neither mindless repetition nor complete invention" (2013, 5). Practice theory guarantees the agent's scope of action by admitting "creativity […] and individual performance" (Nicolini 2013, 4) on part of the agent. Consequently, knowing how to perform a practice does not amount to following fixed rules. As a matter of fact, practice theory criticizes the supremacy of rules and principles: Schatzki confirms that practice theorists "oppose the idea that explicit rules govern much, if not most, social activity" (2005, 17). According to Nicolini (2013, 24ff.), the authority of principles has a long history in philosophy that dates back to the ancient Greek period. In Plato's philosophy, so Nicolini emphasizes, principles served the purpose of providing "stability" (2013, 24) at the sight of the "uncertainty" (2013, 24) that is characteristic of human life. This observation attaches to the criticism of Dewey – who is in this context also quoted by Nicolini (2013, 24) – that I presented in the first chapter. In contrast to the principle-oriented tradition, practice theory assumes that knowing how to perform a practice presupposes the possession of certain "capacities such as know-how, skills, tacit understanding, and dispositions" (Schatzki 2005, 16). These capacities build "the principal psychological basis of activity" (Schatzki 2005, 16) and, thus, lay the foundation for practices. As such, the aforementioned capacities guide the performance of practices in different contexts.

The second characteristic is linked with central aspects of the third one. According to

[12] Note that I changed around Nicolini's initial second and third characteristic to simplify matters.

Nicolini, the third common feature of practice theories is that practices are perceived "as routine bodily activities made possible by the active contribution of an array of material resources" (2013, 4). This feature is particularly complex as it contains various heterogenous elements. First of all, practice theories *associate practices with routine*: A composition of activities constituting a practice is repeated on a regular basis and can be performed automatically without full awareness of one's actions. Second, practice theories stress that *practices are* "*mediated"* (Schatzki 2005, 11; emphasis added) *by material objects*. This entails, among other things, not only that a practice can be (co-)constituted by objects but also that the performance of some practice might require the use of objects as instruments. Third, by equating practices with bodily activities, practice theories regard *practices as being "embodied"* (Schatzki 2005, 11; emphasis added). In this context, Schatzki's (2005) remarks are particularly helpful. In Schatzki's opinion, the embodiment of practices denotes that "the forms of human activity are entwined with the character of the human body" (2005, 11). Thus, the body is the medium to express and perform the activities that constitute practices. As such, the body has two functions in practice theory: First, it is the "meeting point of mind and activity" (Schatzki 2005, 12) within an agent. While an agent's intentions and the like are put into action only by means of the body, bodily states and physical occurrences have repercussions upon what the agent intends to do. Second, the body constitutes the social – and, with it, practices – as it is the medium that enables an agent to get in touch with others: "[T]he body is the meeting points both of mind and activity and of individual activity and social manifold." (Schatzki 2005, 17) According to Schatzki (2005, 11), the importance of embodiment often induces practice theorists to argue that the constitution of the body and activities takes place within practices. However, following Schatzki (2005, 20), practice theorists even go one step further and acknowledge that the constitution of mind happens within practices. Consequently, practice theories regard agents, at least implicitly, to be socially constituted: "[M]any features of individuals are claimed to arise from the incorporation of humans into social practices. […] [T]here come to be […] humans with activities, minds, identities, and genders through this incorporation." (Schatzki 2005, 20) Hitherto, it has been demonstrated that the activities that constitute practices are embodied. However, this also holds true for the agent's capacities dealt with in the context of the second common feature: Practice theory conceives capacities like skills, know-how and tacit knowledge that guide the performance of practices as "embodied capacities" (Schatzki 2005, 16).

This aspect of embodiment refers to another crucial element of practice theory that is accentuated by Schatzki (2005) but neglected by Nicolini's definition of the third common feature. Schatzki affirms that the embodied capacities/skills and the embodied practical understanding[13] that guide the performance of practices are shared. These are, as such, "the same in different individuals" (Schatzki 2005, 18) who engage in the same practices. Thus, it can be summarized that practice theorists, fourth, insist that *practices are based on a shared practical understanding* that is embodied. What is crucially important is that shared practical understanding is an essential prerequisite for taking part in a practice and is advanced in the performance of practices: "Practical understanding is, thus, a battery of bodily abilities that results from, and also makes possible, participation in practices." (Schatzki 2005, 18) Therefore, shared practical understanding is one of the key concepts of practice theory. The elements described above are attributed so much importance that Schatzki uses them to express practice theory's distinctive notion of the social: "[T]he social is a field of embodied, materially interwoven practices centrally organized around shared practical understandings." (2005, 12)

According to Nicolini, the fourth common feature of practice theory is that practice theory employs an *alternative understanding of knowledge, meaning and discourse*. Nicolini's redefinition of knowledge attaches to and thereby confirms my extended interpretation of the third common feature: Knowledge is "a form of mastery" (2013, 5) and "a way of knowing shared with others, a set of practical methods acquired through learning, inscribed in objects, embodied, and only partially articulated in discourse" (2013, 5). Knowledge is no longer perceived to consist in learned facts that are applied by following fixed rules. Instead, it becomes the practical understanding of certain methods that an agent has acquired through participating in a practice and shares with others. Obviously, this conception of knowledge is accompanied by an altered understanding of meaning. Shared practical understanding confers meaning to practices by making sense of the activities that constitute them: "When individuals 'take over' such existing practices, they are enrolled in the specific horizon of intelligibility associated with it, and which implies a certain way of understanding oneself, others, and the

[13] In this context, Schatzki makes an underhand use of the terminology: At first, he subsumes skills under the class of capacities (2005, 16) whereas it remains unclear how capacities are related to practical understanding. Schatzki's (2005, esp. 12 and 17f.) subsequent use of skills and practical understanding, on the other hand, indicates that he uses these terms synonymously. I chose to follow this path.

events that occur as part of the practice." (Nicolini 2013, 5) According to Nicolini, practice theory also rejects the prevalent notion of discourse that stresses discourse's potential to represent the world. Rather, discourse is seen as a practice that serves as an instrument to transform the world (Nicolini 2013, 5).

The fifth common feature of practice theory is that it takes the dimension of *interest and power into account* in analyzing the social. Nicolini (2013, 6) states that practices locate humans and other entities, thereby granting them social positions. As such, a certain extent of discrimination is immanent in each practice: Practices function as sources of difference and inequality among humans and – as posthumanists would add – between humans and other entities. These distinctions can be attributed to the balance of power for they are drawn in a way that meets the interests of those in power. However, as the balance of power is constantly shifting, practices are a persistent subject of discussion and critique. Therefore, practice theory considers practices as historically and culturally contingent phenomena that are open to change:

> Practices are […] necessarily open to contestation and this keeps them continuously in a state of tension and change. This, in turn, contributes to the idea that practices and the world they conjure are highly situated in historical and material conditions and, at least in principle, given different practices, the world could be different. (Nicolini 2013, 6)

Corresponding to my main methodological point of criticism, the presented common features of practice theory cannot be defined in terms of sufficient and/or necessary criteria. At this point, it could be objected that Nicolini (2013, 3) indicates that these features distinguish practice theory from other forms of theorizing. This could speak in favor of declaring the common features necessary or at least sufficient criteria for it implies that the features are exhibited by *each* theory of practice. Nevertheless, one should keep Nicolini's (2013, 9) remark concerning family resemblance in mind: He attributes to the family of practice theories various resemblances but also fundamental differences. In the same vein, Nicolini (2013, 214) insists with regard to another list of characteristics that every practice theory possesses some typical traits and objectives but no theory comprises *all* of them. Also, practice theory has been depicted as a theoretical approach that focuses on thick understandings of concrete contexts. As such, it explicitly refrains from any attempt to simplify the social, either through principles or lists of criteria. Thus, referring to the five common features in terms of necessary and/or sufficient criteria contradicts practice theory's tenets. Therefore, I assume that all practice theories share to differing degrees at least some of the depicted features.

Considering the common features portrayed before, it is no surprise that practice theory has been introduced as a “revolution” (Stern 2003, 186) in the analysis of social phenomena. Practice thinking breaks with a long-standing tradition of approaching the social, partly by abandoning classic dualisms like subject/object or body/mind that have shaped the discourse (Nicolini 2013, 2; Schatzki 2005, 10f.; Stern 2003, 185ff.). In this context, Schatzki (2005, 10f.) explicitly remarks that practice theory rejects all kinds of individualisms. Thus, Schatzki substantiates the possibility to counter the insufficient distinctions between pets and companion animals drawn by moral individualists with the aid of practice-sensitive methods.

2.1.3. What is “praxeology”?

“Praxeology” is another complex concept that appears in the discussion of social phenomena. Particularly unclear is how praxeology and practice theory are related. For instance, when invoking in Wikipedia the German translation of the entry “practice theory” (no date), one is forwarded to the entry “Praxeologie” (no date) (Engl.: praxeology) that describes the developments explained above. Although Wikipedia cannot be considered a reliable source in the scientific context, it reflects the tendency to merge “praxeology” and “practice theory” or use them interchangeably. Moreover, several standard encyclopedias and handbooks do not provide distinct entries on “practice theory” *as well as* “praxeology”. Examples include “The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy” (Audi 1999), the “Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics” (Chadwick 2012), the “Neues Handbuch philosophischer Grundbegriffe” (Kolmer and Wildfeuer 2011), the “Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie online” (Ritter et al. 2017 [1971-2007]) and “The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy” (Zalta no date). Thereby, merging both concepts is further encouraged.

To distinguish praxeology and practice theory, the online version of the German standard work “Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie” (Ritter et al. 2017) offers a helpful starting point that I consider in detail. This encyclopedia lacks an entry on practice theory, but contains a comprehensive definition of “praxeology” by Maluschke (2017 [1989]). According to Maluschke, the modern understanding of praxeology is connoted with a pragmatic stance. Following Espinas (1890), it denotes a theoretical branch focusing on actions that aim at certain effects (Maluschke 2017). Developing an economic perspective, von Mises (1940) regards praxeology as a theory on the regularities of human action that concern the relation between means and ends (Maluschke 2017).

Von Mises distinguishes two realms in the scientific study of human action: First, praxeology which he perceives as a theoretical field to analyze the structure of human action and its ends. Second, scientific disciplines like the humanities and psychology that analyze human action and its ends materially (Maluschke 2017). On the whole, the short excursion presents praxeology as a theoretical frame that is independent of practice theory. By contrast, Nicolini's (2013) introduction to practice theory offers an explicit link between praxeology and practice theory. Referring to Wacquant (1992), Nicolini stresses that Bourdieu's and Giddens' approaches to practice theory are occasionally termed "'social praxeology'" (2013, 44). It is beyond the limits of my thesis to settle all the conceptual unclarities brought up in this chapter. My argumentation does not even presuppose such a final clarification of all involved concepts. For this reason, I follow Nicolini in using the term "praxeology" to mark the Bourdieuian and Giddenian branch of practice theory.

Until this point, I have – at least rudimentarily – clarified the key concepts that are used in analyzing social phenomena. Also, I have identified the central themes and subjects of interest that practice theory deals with as a theoretical approach. In the next step of my analysis, I focus on the Wittgensteinian account of practice theory that Schatzki (2008 [1996]) has developed in his book "Social Practices. A Wittgensteinian Approach to Human Activity and the Social".

2.2. Schatzki: a Wittgensteinian understanding of social practices

It is of crucial importance that Schatzki's Wittgensteinian account emphasizes the embeddedness of social practices within the social. In Schatzki's opinion, practices are inseparably linked with the surrounding context of social phenomena. Thus, I first need to consider the bigger picture by presenting Schatzki's Wittgensteinian understanding of social life. Afterwards, I apply Nicolini's method of "zooming in" (2013, 219) on one aspect of this picture by analyzing Schatzki's notion of social practices in detail.

2.2.1. Integrating the bigger picture: a Wittgensteinian view on the social

Schatzki (2008 [1996]), 88) declares his understanding of social life a Wittgensteinian position as it draws on Wittgenstein's later philosophy. Schatzki's conception of the social underlies the central thesis that mind, body and the self are socially constituted. As such, these phenomena are not given but produced and shaped in contact with others. In this respect, Schatzki's Wittgensteinian account lays emphasis on the third

common feature of practice theories listed above.

One cornerstone of Schatzki's perspective on the social builds Wittgenstein's critique of the traditional dichotomy of mind and action resp. the body. A prominent advocate of this dichotomy was Descartes who considered the mind as an individual's inner realm that is distinguished from the outer realm of the individual's bodily behavior. By contrast, Wittgenstein suggests an alternative understanding of mind and body. Although Wittgenstein admits openly that humans have inner phenomena, he denies that the inner exists independently in physical form as some "realm or entity" (Schatzki 2008, 25). Interpreting Wittgenstein, Schatzki stresses that an individual's mind and body become closely entangled by her participation in social life. The body of the individual serves as a medium to express her inner phenomena: "As an underlying biological, but socially molded, work, the human body is the site for the expression of the aspects of human existence articulated in 'mental state' talk." (Schatzki 2008, 24f.) Accordingly, Wittgenstein acknowledges two types of life phenomena. First, there are "'outer' phenomena" (Schatzki 2008, 28) like an individual's bodily activities that others perceive in the world. Second, there are "'inner' phenomena" (Schatzki 2008, 28) that can only be accessed by the individual who experiences them. Others perceive inner phenomena indirectly by reading them off the individual's behavior. Opposing Descartes, Wittgenstein argues that inner phenomena cannot be identified like objects in the world on the basis of certain traits. What indicates and justifies the existence of inner phenomena is that the individual is certain of experiencing them: "[T]here *is* an inner episode at all only insofar as one 'knows' (or cannot doubt) that one is having a sensation or sense impression." (Schatzki 2008, 29) According to Schatzki, Wittgenstein distinguishes two types of a person's inner: First, the person's conditions of life and, second, "the interiority of sensations, feelings, and images" (2008, 40) that indicate her life conditions to herself. As the notion of conditions of life/life conditions is a key element in Schatzki's understanding of the social, it requires a thorough examination.

According to Schatzki, Wittgenstein endorses a specific alternative view on theorizing mind. Schatzki holds that Wittgenstein regards psychological/mental, i.e. inner, phenomena "as conditions of life expressed by the human body" (2008, 22). Thereby, a condition of life is understood as "a state of affairs: that things stand or are going someway for someone" (Schatzki 2008, 34). Consequently, Wittgenstein perceives mind as

"a collection of ways things stand and are going" (Schatzki 2008, 23) for a person[14], whereas mental phenomena are specific "aspects" (Schatzki 2008, 22) of this collection. Often, the concepts of conditions of life are associated with particular "patterns of life (*Lebensmustern*)" (Schatzki 2008, 31).

Schatzki (2008, 37ff.) identifies four main categories of conditions of life in Wittgenstein's work. First, there are *conditions of consciousness* like hearing, seeing and being in pain that Wittgenstein calls "*Bewusstseinszustände*" (Schatzki 2008, 37). Conditions of this type qualify as "'mental conditions' (*Seelenzustände*)" (Schatzki 2008, 37): They are constituted by "the continuous occurrence of some such phenomenon as a pain, image, or impression" (Schatzki 2008, 37). As such, they break off when the person experiencing them loses consciousness or focuses her attention on something else. *Emotions and moods* like happiness, fear and depression build the second category of conditions of life. They also qualify as mental conditions: While being experienced they are "continuously expressed" (Schatzki 2008, 37) by bodily activities but need not break off when the person falls unconscious or turns her attention away. The third category comprises *cognitive resp. intellectual* (i.e. "*geistige*" [Schatzki 2008, 38]) *conditions* like having doubts and wishing, intending or understanding something. Life conditions of this type are "attitudes and stances" (Schatzki 2008, 38) that are not continuously expressed while being experienced. There is a special class of life conditions like hope, expectation, hate, love that are emotions and moods when being continuously expressed but qualify as cognitive conditions without continuous expression. The fourth category of life conditions is formed by *actions*. These are defined as "either bodily doings or sayings or something a person carries out by way of performing a bodily doing or saying in a specific circumstance" (Schatzki 2008, 38). Behavior is portrayed as a subgroup of actions. Unlike actions, behavior is continuously expressed in the course of being displayed. Schatzki remarks that each category of life conditions

[14] Schatzki's Wittgensteinian account links personhood with having life conditions: The "person can be defined as the type of entity to which both life conditions and physical properties can be (correctly) ascribed" (2008, 34). It looks as if Schatzki has introduced the criterion of having conditions of life to exclude animals – who he acknowledges to possess physical properties – from gaining the status of person: "By physical properties I principally mean physical states of a person's body such as weight, red blood cell count, renal functioning, and so on. This definition [of person, E.T.], as it stands, is incomplete, since it admits many sorts of animals as people. A fuller definition would specify further characteristics that an entity must bear to qualify as a person (e.g., identity and gender, the grasp of language, and/or self-consciousness). Regardless, however, of whatever further characteristics are argued to be definitive of personhood, conditions of life remain the central component of this status, for possession of all putative additional defining characteristics presupposes them." (2008, 34) Thus, Schatzki seems to imply here that animals do not possess conditions of life.

is connoted with a particular “dimension” (2008, 39) of human life and, as such, provides information about them: In detail, conditions of consciousness refer to “[w]hat one is explicitly aware of” (2008, 40), emotions and moods refer to “[h]ow it is going with one” (2008, 40), cognitive resp. intellectual conditions refer to “[o]ne’s stances and attitudes” (2008, 40) whereas actions refer to “[w]hat one is doing” (2008, 40).

Schatzki (2008, 32 and 41) states that conditions of life are expressed by inner and outer life phenomena without being reducible to the latter. The key point is that the concrete context determines which conditions of life individual life phenomena express. In this respect, Schatzki (2008, 35ff.) distinguishes four kinds of contexts: First, the inner phenomena and behavior that the person displayed in the past and is expected to display in the future. Second, the whole “web” (Schatzki 2008, 35) of conditions of life that the person is in. Third, “the immediate and wider situations” (Schatzki 2008, 36) that the person’s action is embedded in. Fourth, the social practices in which the person takes part in. All of these four kinds of context shape “the expressive relation” (Schatzki 2008, 35) between conditions of life and life phenomena. What is striking at this point is the fact that the notion of social practices appears for the first time in Schatzki’s description of the bigger picture of the social. In the process of learning practices, an individual is taught how to express certain conditions of life by activities of her body and react to such expressions of others (Schatzki 2008, 23). The fact that practices differ among cultures is attributed to differences among the conditions of life that are expressed by these practices (Schatzki 2008, 36). This implies that every culture forms its own set of life conditions whose expression is regulated by practices and mediated by bodily activities. The differing sets of life conditions might overlap, in part considerably. However, an in-depth analysis of social practices presupposes further comments on the social constitution of mind, body and the self.

As already stated, the body is a medium to express conditions of life. Schatzki (2008, 42ff.) distinguishes three ways how the body expresses life conditions. First, the body manifests life conditions: It exhibits conditions of life by means of its activities. Second, the body signifies life conditions to the actor and to others. What concerns the actor, signification is explained by drawing on Heidegger: The signifying of life conditions decides upon which action an actor performs in order to achieve an end she aspires. What concerns others, signifying means that owing to the condition(s) of life an actor has expressed she can be assumed to perform other bodily activities as well. Unlike mental conditions, which are exhibited in behavior, cognitive conditions are signified:

Inferring the expression of some cognitive condition from an actor's behavior presupposes detailed information on the involved stakeholder, the concrete circumstances and "sociohistorical contexts" (Schatzki 2008, 44). Third, the body serves as an instrument to implement conditions of life: It executes the conditions of life that are signified to the actor by means of her activities in the world. According to Wittgenstein, these three ways are fed by the biological basis of "certain 'natural' bodily reactions that express conditions of life" (Schatzki 2008, 52). In the process of socialization within a cultural horizon, the natural expression of life conditions becomes intensified and transformed, particularly through linguistic usage. Hence, the social shapes the expression of conditions of life as well as the constitution of an expressive body and mind: "So the possession of an expressive body, and therewith of mind, is the product of social training and learning." (Schatzki 2008, 52) On the whole, the bodily expression of life conditions makes a person "at home in her body" (Schatzki 2008, 46) and, thus, constitutes the self with her peculiar identity: "[I]n expressing particular conditions, bodily activity *eo ipso* establishes *that there is* someone in them. […] [B]odily activity also establishes that there are individuals with particular identities." (Schatzki 2008, 47)

It is of crucial importance that the expressive body is acquired within the process of learning social practices. The formation of the expressive body clearly testifies to the Wittgensteinian spirit of Schatzki's account. In part, what follows has already been touched: Human babies are endowed with a biological basis that enables them to express nothing "but the most rudimentary life conditions" (Schatzki 2008, 60). In the process of socialization, the child develops the expressivity of her body by being taught how to participate in different practices: She learns how to associate different "patterns of doings, sayings, and circumstances" (Schatzki 2008, 61) that constitute practices with specific life conditions.[15] Thereby, the range of life conditions that the child is capable of expressing is extended. The teaching methods comprise "extensive assertion, correction, ostensive definition, reference to paradigms, signs of disapproval, citation

[15] Interestingly, Schatzki indicates that humans induce pet animals to undergo the same process that results in the development of an expressive body in human children: "In treating the child's behavior as expressions of life conditions, people act toward and speak to it in ways that help constitute contexts in which the child latches onto new doings and sayings. Adults do not act in these ways toward inanimate objects and events (and most animals other than pets)." (2008, 63) I have already pointed out that Schatzki (2008, 34) seems to deny animals the possession of conditions of life. So, even if pet animals would develop expressive bodies, they would lack the relevant conditions to be expressed by such bodies. I disagree with the whole line of thought: It is obvious that most animals possess conditions of life, at least rudimentarily, for they evidently experience to differing degrees "that things stand or are going someway" (Schatzki 2008, 34) for them. As Schatzki has made a similar argument with regard to the experience of life conditions in human babies, I assume that he would agree with me on that point. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of my thesis to go further into this discussion.

of rules, observation, participation, attempts" (Schatzki 2008, 60f.) and are reinforced by language acquisition. Schatzki illustrates this point by means of Wittgenstein's example of being in pain: By observing adults' reactions towards her natural expressions of pain, the child learns the use of the term "pain" and how to respond to someone experiencing it. This complex and long-lasting process of "maturation" (Schatzki 2008, 65) aims at making the child "one of us" (Schatzki 2008, 66): A human being who shares what Wittgenstein calls a "form of life" (Schatzki 2008, 67) with others. In this context, the notion of life form primarily refers to sharing "sociocultural forms of life" (Schatzki 2008, 69) that are mediated by shared practices. According to Schatzki (2008, 65f.), the decisive criterion for ascertaining whether a person belongs to "us" by sharing a common form of life is intelligibility: The person meets common standards of using language and performs actions that others comprehend, especially in expressing her life conditions. Deviations from common usage do not necessarily exclude a person from sharing a form of life with others: By providing explanations for deviating behavior, the intelligibility of her actions towards others is maintained and she still qualifies as one of them.

The expressivity of the body is a key point in understanding how Schatzki perceives the social constitution of mind, body and the self. The expressive body is "a social product" (Schatzki 2008, 70) that is developed and perpetuated in constant exchange with others who share a common form of life: "[T]he development of an expressive body depends on the existence of other people who react to it *qua* expressive body." (Schatzki 2008, 63) However, what is more is that the body constitutes mind by expressing inner phenomena and conditions of life in particular: "Our physical being [the body, E.T.] simply causally brings about the phenomena that express socially instituted conditions, and thereby maintains and makes possible the existence of mind/action." (Schatzki 2008, 65) As the body – which establishes mind – is socially constituted, so is mind. Further, it has been pointed out that the expression of life conditions by the body constitutes the self with her peculiar identity. It follows that the self is socially constituted for body and mind are socially constituted. Thus, the social builds the basis for the constitution of body, mind and the self. In this context, it is crucially important to recognize the role of practices as the anchor of the social constitution of body, mind and the self: After all, the expressive body and the expression of life conditions is constituted and governed by practices (Schatzki 2008, 86f.). Thus, the self that is established by bodily expressions of life conditions is constituted in social practices (Schatzki

2008, 83). Hence, social practices “make it the case that there is someone in those conditions [of life, E.T.] expressing them through this body” (Schatzki 2008, 87).
Schatzki (2008, 70ff.) stresses that every participant in social practices possesses four characteristics: First, the person is in conditions of life. Second, she can communicate her life conditions verbally and behaviorally to others. Third, the person is capable of determining the life conditions of others’ by perceiving and inferring them. In general, the understanding of a life condition presupposes that one understands the concept of it: One knows how to explain and apply “the linguistic expression” (Schatzki 2008, 70) of this life condition and reacts appropriately to (linguistic and behavioral) expressions of it. Fourth, the person participating in practices has “’convictions’ that, in Wittgenstein’s words, ‘hold fast’ in a human life” (Schatzki 2008, 80). The correctness of such convictions is not a subject of investigation but is obvious. On the whole, that is the bigger picture of the social in which Schatzki’s notion of social practices is embedded. In the next section, I consider Schatzki’s concept of practices in detail.

2.2.2. Social practices in the focus

First of all, Schatzki draws attention to the fact that social practices are not an explicit object of investigation in Wittgenstein’s oeuvre. Thus, Schatzki calls his notion of social practices “Wittgensteinian” for being “partly based on and inspired by” (2008, 88) Wittgenstein’s writings. As Schatzki’s notion of social practices is rather abstract and theory-loaded, I have summarized the central points in Figure 4. My interpretation of Schatzki’s understanding of social practices closely sticks to the text and also borrows the structural subdivision of the corresponding chapter in Schatzki’s book.

2.2.2.1. Three categories of practice

Schatzki distinguishes three categories of practice. The first category is “practice *qua* development through doing” (Schatzki 2008, 89). It stresses the dimension of acquiring practices: Practice is conceived as an activity that is learnt and improved by continuous practice and performance. The second category of practice are “practices *qua* spatio-temporal entities” (Schatzki 2008, 90). It highlights the dimension that practices exist as entities that extend in space and time: A practice is perceived “as a temporally unfolding and spatially dispersed nexus of doings and sayings” (Schatzki 2008, 89). As such a nexus, so Schatzki holds, each practice exhibits a specific “organization” (2008, 89) that comprises

1.) “understandings” (2008, 89),

2.) “explicit rules, principles, precepts, and instructions” (2008, 89) and

3.) “’teleoaffective’ structures embracing ends, projects, tasks, purposes, beliefs, emotions, and moods” (2008, 89).

Together, these elements build the organization of a spatiotemporal practice that links the practice-constituting doings and sayings (Schatzki 2008, 89). Schatzki distinguishes two types of “spatiotemporal practice” (2008, 91): First, there are dispersed practices and, second, there are integrative practices.

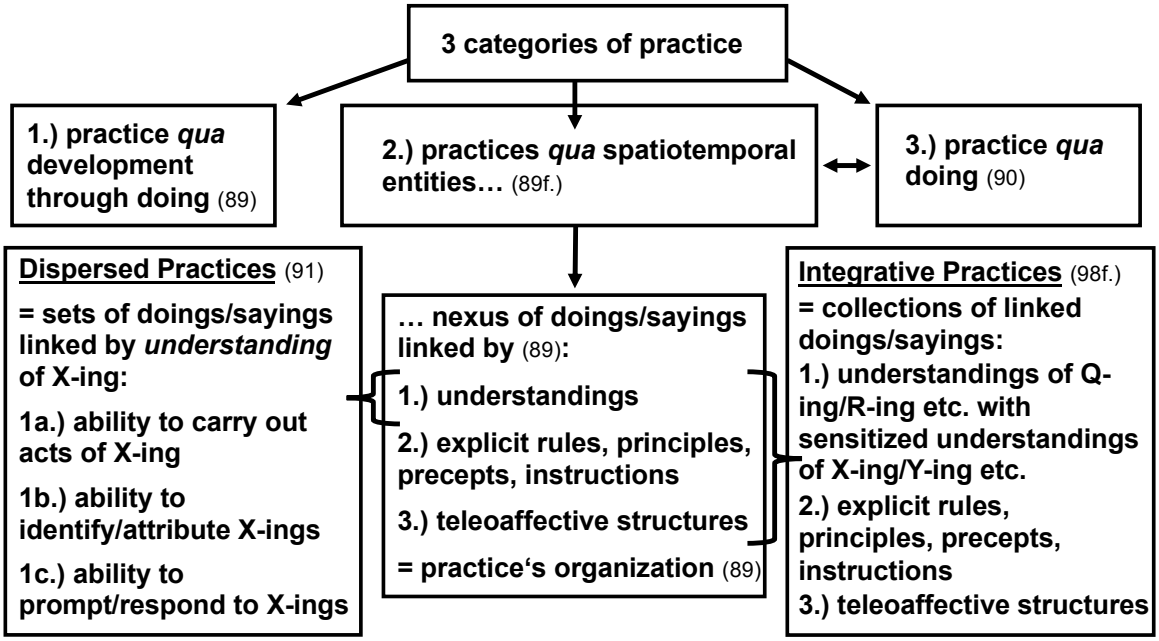

Figure 4: The diagram summarizes the central points of Schatzki's (2008) Wittgensteinian notion of social practices.

The third category is “practice *qua* do-ing” (Schatzki 2008, 90). It emphasizes the dimension of actually performing a practice: In this context, practice is understood as “performing an action or carrying out a practice of the second sort [practices qua spatiotemporal entities, E.T.]” (Schatzki 2008, 90). Schatzki’s analysis focuses on the second category of practice. Thus, in what follows I consider in detail his notion of spatiotemporal practices, starting with dispersed practices.

2.2.2.2. Dispersed practices

Dispersed practices are the first type of spatiotemporal practices. The term “dispersed” refers to the flexibility of these practices that are carried out “in a wide variety of situations” (Schatzki 2008, 92). Common examples include “the practices of describing, ordering, following rules, explaining, questioning, reporting, examining, and imagining” (Schatzki 2008, 91). Dispersed practices are simple forms of spatiotemporal practices:

They solely display the first of the three characteristics of spatiotemporal practices' organization. The "set of doings and sayings" (Schatzki 2008, 91) constituting the dispersed practice of X-ing is linked by an *understanding* of X-ing through

1a.) "the ability [acc. Schatzki knowing how, E.T.] to carry out acts of X-ing (e.g., describing, ordering, questioning)" (Schatzki 2008, 91),

1b.) "the ability to identify and attribute X-ings, in both one's own and other's cases" (Schatzki 2008, 91) and

1c.) – if existent – "the ability to prompt or respond to X-ings" (Schatzki 2008, 91).

In dispersed practices, linkage of the constituting doings and sayings through rules (2.) is unusual whereas linkage through teleoaffective structures (3.) does not occur (Schatzki 2008, 91f.). Possibly, the lack of teleoaffectivity could be ascribed to the fact that some basic version of dispersed practices is frequently integrated in the performance of the more complex type of integrative practices:

> What is true is that people usually, though not always, are also engaged in an integrative practice when carrying on a dispersed one. When someone describes something, for example, he or she is usually also carrying on farming, nautical, cooking, education, military, or building practices. (Schatzki 2008, 99)

Schatzki points out that the existence of dispersed practices necessarily precedes the performance of individual acts that are meant to carry them out. The dispersed practice establishes the relevant understanding that renders individual doings and sayings acts to perform the practice in question: "[A] doing or saying constitutes an X-ing on the background of an understanding carried by the practice of X-ing." (Schatzki 2008, 92) Two types of understanding compose in conjunction with each other the understanding of a practice: Propositional and non-propositional understanding (Schatzki 2008, 92ff.). Propositional understanding linguistically expresses the "living" (Schatzki 2008, 93) non-propositional understanding of some practice X-ing. Thus, the propositional understanding of X-ing presupposes non-propositional understanding of X-ing and with it the existence of the practice of X-ing. Schatzki writes: "The (conceptual) understanding, against which a particular behavior-in-circumstances constitutes X-ing, is carried by the practice of X-ing." (2008, 93) Consequently, the performance of any individual act of X-ing presupposes that the practice of X-ing already exists.

Another interesting trait of dispersed practices is that Schatzki associates them with Wittgenstein's notion of language-games: Dispersed practices are language-games.

Citing Wittgenstein, Schatzki characterizes a language-game as “an open-ended set of behaviors into which the speaking and using of language are woven” (2008, 95). Dispersed practices represent language-games for prescribing clearly defined but changeable sets of linguistic and behavioral actions that have to be carried out in the performance of a certain practice. Reversely, Schatzki emphasizes that a great number of Wittgenstein’s language-games qualify as dispersed practices. As an example, Schatzki quotes the language-game that concerns the word “x”: This language-game is “composed of uses of the word together with actions” (2008, 95) and “comprises […] a set of behaviors linked by the understanding of X” (2008, 95). Hence, it “can be added to the roster of dispersed practices” (Schatzki 2008, 95).

To elucidate Schatzki’s notion of dispersed practices, I spell it out in detail by the practice of describing. Obviously, the practice of describing is not restricted to a specific realm like cooking but is instead an integral part of numerous fields of life. Besides, no explicit rules or specific material ends are connoted with describing as it can be used to pursue manifold goals. By contrast, participation in the practice of describing is guaranteed by *understanding*: To describe something, one needs to know how describing is performed, can identify own and others’ acts as describing and knows how to react to a person who describes something. Moreover, describing is a language-game: It consists in a particular set of linguistic and behavioral actions that are commonly known to constitute the practice of describing. In the next step of my analysis, I explain how Schatzki depicts integrative practices.

2.2.2.3. Integrative practices

Integrative practices are the second type of spatiotemporal practices. They possess a higher level of complexity than dispersed practices and apply to specific spheres of social life. Schatzki also remarks that these practices are “constitutive of” (2008, 98) fields of life. It is implied that the development of (new) integrative practices constitutes and modifies the spheres of social life. Later in this thesis, this point will be of interest for the distinction between pets and companion animals. Schatzki cites the following examples of integrative practices: “[F]arming practices, business practices, voting practices, teaching practices, celebration practices, cooking practices, recreational practices, industrial practices, religious practices, and banking practices.” (2008, 98) Schatzki is very clear about the point that integrative practices do *not* simply consist in “assemblages of dispersed practices, which are added together to form integrative

ones" (2008, 99). Although dispersed practices are frequently components of integrative practices, they may undergo changes in being integrated in integrative practices (Schatzki 2008, 99). Yet, Schatzki (2008, 99) acknowledges that in performing a dispersed practice one is often at the same time performing an integrative practice.

The structure of integrative practices corresponds to the organization of spatiotemporal practices. The doings and sayings constituting integrative practices are linked to form "collections" (Schatzki 2008, 98). In detail, the practice-constituting doings and sayings are linked by

1.) "understandings of Q-ing and R-ing (etc.), along with 'sensitized' understandings of X-ing and Y-ing (etc.), the latter carried by the transfigured forms that the dispersed practices of X-ing and Y-ing adopt within integrative practices" (Schatzki 2008, 98f.)[16],
2.) "explicit rules, principles, precepts, and instructions" (Schatzki 2008, 99) and
3.) "teleoaffective structures comprising hierarchies of ends, tasks, projects, beliefs, emotions, moods, and the like" (Schatzki 2008, 99).

Each characteristic is accompanied by a short explanation. Regarding understandings (1.), Schatzki remarks that Q-ing and R-ing do not represent dispersed practices but just "simple activities" (2008, 100). X-ing and Y-ing on, the other hand, are dispersed practices that undergo a change in becoming part of an integrative practice. To give an example of a sensitized understanding of a dispersed practice, Schatzki describes how the understanding of ordering transforms in the context of military service: "[T]he understanding of ordering he [a soldier, E.T.] has previously acquired becomes sensitized to the particular way the activity runs on there" (2008, 100). Regarding rules (2.), Schatzki stresses that each participant in an integrative practice is required to act according to these regulations. Sometimes, these regulations even "specify particular actions" (Schatzki 2008, 100) as it is the case in guidelines for cooking. Regarding teleoaffective structures (3.), Schatzki adds that the goals (teleology) and characteristic emotions (affectivity) of an integrative practice are displayed in the practice-constituting doings and sayings. Further, the precise hierarchy of teleology and affectivity may not be explicated. What is more is that an integrative practice's teleoaffective structure can comprise only teleology if the practice lacks affectivity. To illustrate this

[16] To my knowledge, Schatzki has not stated explicitly whether understanding (1.) comprises the three characteristics (1a.-1c.) constitutive for understanding in dispersed practices. Obviously, these three characteristics are inherent in X-ing, Y-ing and the like for these are transformed dispersed practices. As Q-ing, R-ing and the like are defined as simple activities of other sorts, I do not assume that they possess the three characteristics in question.

point, Schatzki refers to a pair of opposites. While cooking exhibits teleology but lacks affectivity, educating children is associated with both components: “No particular emotions and moods […] are appropriate for cooking. By contrast, certain emotions are appropriate for, and nearly inherent to rearing practices, for example, love, hate, and affection in Western versions.” (Schatzki 2008, 101) Schatzki terms the teleoaffective structure of integrative practices “a collection of possible orders of life conditions” (2008, 101) as it includes teleological and affective components.

The organization of an integrative practice determines which actions are correct and which are acceptable in performing the practice (Schatzki 2008, 102). In addition, the organization of an integrative practice defines its scope. A linguistic or behavioral action is part of an integrative practice if it qualifies as an element of the practice’s organization: “A doing or saying belongs to a given practice if it expresses components of that practice’s organization.” (Schatzki 2008, 103f.) However, the drawing of sharp lines between integrative practices is complicated by the fact that the elements of integrative practices’ organization frequently overlap, at times considerably (Schatzki 2008, 104). Thus, doings and sayings can belong to more than one integrative practice.

Due to the rules and teleoaffective structures inherent in integrative practices, humans usually know when they participate in integrative practices (Schatzki 2008, 104). Awareness is further raised by naming integrative practices: “[A] significant clue to which practices constitute people’s lives is the vocabulary they use to classify their activities.” (Schatzki 2008, 104) Another important aspect is that humans “perpetuate” (Schatzki 2008, 104) integrative practices by giving names to them. I seize on this remark as it is a key point that proves the legitimacy of my thesis: By establishing a distinction between pets and companion animals, my thesis does not concern a difference on a purely conceptual level. Rather, sharpening this conceptual distinction gives expression to the fact that humans actually take part in different social practices by interacting with animal fellows. I substantiate this thesis with sociological findings in the third chapter. Hence, the conceptual distinction between “pets” and “companion animals” seeks to reveal the different social practices that underlie these terms.

Finally, Schatzki deals with the contingency of practices that concerns dispersed and integrative practices alike. He rejects the notion of a universal essence of social practices and portrays practices instead as human creations that depend on concrete social contexts: “[T]here are no practices in themselves, only culturally relative ones.” (Schatzki 2008, 107) So, social practices are not only subject to historic and cultural

change but are also frequently performed differently in different cultural contexts.

I complement Schatzki's analysis by a few remarks on the structure of integrative practices. To illustrate integrative practices' organization, I spell out in detail the example of hanging a picture on the wall. As the activity of hanging a picture on the wall comprises numerous simple actions, it is too complex to qualify as a dispersed practice. These actions include, for instance, determining an appropriate spot, hammering a nail into the wall and hanging the picture on the nail. Each of these sub-actions qualifies as a dispersed practice itself. Moreover, the organization that structures the activity of hanging a picture on the wall exhibits not only understandings (1.) but also rules and the like (2.). For instance, there are rules that specify the right order of performing the individual sub-actions: If we attempt to hang the picture on the nail without having hammered the nail into the wall before, we fail to hang the picture on the wall. The precise order of the sub-actions is determined by a specific telos (3.), i.e. the goal of hanging the picture on the wall. Thus, the telos of hanging the picture on the wall also constitutes the understandings as well as rules and the like that are required to achieve this goal. Hanging a picture on a wall is one of the cases that lacks affective requirements: It does not make a difference whether we are joyful or sad in performing the practice. On the basis of this analysis, the activity of hanging a picture on a wall proves to be an integrative practice.

Further, I elucidate the organization of integrative practices by phenomena that violate these practices. Diamond (1978) provides two examples that can be used to explain this point. The first example concerns the practice of vegetarianism: Diamond (1978, 467f.) highlights that vegetarianism is *in principle* incompatible with the consumption of meat, even when an animal dies of natural causes like being struck by lightning. For the purpose of my argument, let us assume that a vegetarian nonetheless eats meat of an animal who has been killed by lighting. In this case, the organization of the integrative practice of vegetarianism would be violated at all levels. First, eating meat of animals who have not been killed for human consumption violates vegetarianism at the level of understandings (1.) that are associated with this practice: A vegetarian diet is by definition incompatible with the consumption of *any* meat. Second, the integrative practice of vegetarianism is violated at the level of explicit rules, principles, precepts and instructions (2.): A person who has become a vegetarian has deliberately decided to follow the rule not to eat meat. Third, eating an animal who has been killed by light-

ning also violates the telos (3.) that is inherent in the integrative practice of vegetarianism: By becoming a vegetarian, a person has chosen to pursue the goal not to eat meat which is violated by the action in question. It is worth noting that the practice of vegetarianism may be linked with affectivity (3.). Agam-Segal notices that some vegetarians are filled with disgust by the mere idea of eating meat: "[F]or some vegetarians, going through the moves of eating meat is perhaps physically possible, but it would not be *eating*; not really. It would be a scene from a horror film. For some vegetarians this is what 'eating meat' comes to." (2014, 63) However, one can still become a vegetarian for ethical reasons in spite of enjoying the taste of meat. That is why the practice of vegetarianism is not necessarily linked with a particular set of affections. On the whole, the vegetarian eating an animal who has been killed by lightning clearly violates the integrative practice of vegetarianism and, so, ceases to be a vegetarian. The second example concerns Diamond's reflections on pets. In the first chapter, I have pointed out that Diamond (1978, 469) considers human-pet interactions a practice that constructs the pet as a being who is not eaten. For the purpose of my argument, let us imagine that an animal owner kills her pet for consumption.[17] In this case, the organization of the integrative practice of human-animal fellowship is violated at, at least, two levels. By killing an animal fellow for consumption, one violates the understandings (1.) immanent in the practice(s) of human-animal fellowship and renders the animal livestock: According to the common understanding of animal fellows, animal fellows are simply not resources for human consumption. Second, eating one's animal fellow violates the teleoaffective structures (3.) inherent in the practice(s) of human-animal fellowship: On the one hand, eating one's animal fellow is incompatible with the telos of human-animal fellowship which is opposed to the consumption of the animal. On the other hand, the consumption of an animal fellow violates the affective moment that is typical of human-animal fellowship. Rather than being cared for and loved, the animal is attended to as livestock. It is not clear whether the consumption of animal fellows violates any *explicit* rules and the like (2.) that guide the practice(s) in the fellowship of

[17] There are rumors that the practice of eating pets is occasionally still performed in Switzerland, mainly in rural areas. The Swiss tabloid newspaper "20 minuten" (tab 2014) interviewed an anonymous person who claims to have eaten cat meat regularly in the past. I distrust the reliability of this source, so I do not refer to this article in terms of factual information. Rather, I treat it in terms of fiction as a possible perspective on the practice of eating pets. Interestingly, the interviewee who admits to enjoy the taste of cat meat explicitly shies away from the idea of killing and eating a cat one has kept as a pet for many years. Instead, he reports that Swiss farming families used to eat surplus cats who have been kept solely for the purpose of hunting mice. The humans were not attached to these animals and did not consider them pets. Hence, the interview actually substantiates the argument that it is an integral component of the practice of keeping pets that the pet is not eaten.

humans and animals. For the reasons stated above, killing one's animal fellow for consumption violates the integrative practice(s) of human-animal fellowship. So much about the structure of integrative practices. In the remaining part of this section, I explain how social practices convey intelligibility in Schatzki's eyes.

2.2.2.4. Social practices: articulators of intelligibility

Schatzki's main thesis is that social practices articulate intelligibility. At first, the central terms "intelligibility" and "articulation" are clarified. The notion of intelligibility stands for "making sense" (Schatzki 2008, 111) in terms of "meanings […] or signifieds" (Schatzki 2008, 111). So, intelligibility refers to what something means and what is signified to an actor. "Articulation", on the other hand, is understood as an act of "specification" (Schatzki 2008, 111). In short, Schatzki explains the articulation of intelligibility as follows: "[I]ntelligibility is articulated when meanings or signifieds are specified […]." (2008, 111) Schatzki distinguishes two "dimensions" (2008, 111) of intelligibility. First, world intelligibility which relates to the dimension of *how*: "World intelligibility is how things make sense […]." (Schatzki 2008, 111) The second kind of intelligibility is action intelligibility which relates to the dimension of *what*: "The articulation of action intelligibility is the specification of what makes sense to people to do. What makes sense to people to do […] is 'signified' to them as the action to perform." (Schatzki 2008, 118) Social practices articulate world and action intelligibility by means of their organization (Schatzki 2008, 111): The organization of social practices specifies how things make sense and what makes sense for an actor to do in performing a particular practice. In what follows, I consider this argument in detail.

I begin with Schatzki's remarks on *world intelligibility*. In dispersed practices, the dimension of "how things make sense" is inscribed in "understanding" (Schatzki 2008, 112), the sole element of their organization. Schatzki explains the meaning of individual actions as follows: "Within the dispersed practice of X-ing, for instance, it is instituted that people who perform particular doings and sayings in particular contexts are (understood to be) X-ing, attributing or prompting X-ings, or Y-ing or Z-ing in response to X-ings." (2008, 112) So, the understanding of a dispersed practice links particular doings and sayings and renders them constitutive for the practice. Individual actions acquire the meaning of actions that perform a dispersed practice on the basis of the practice's understandings. This understanding is shared among the practice's participants and makes their behavior intelligible to one another (Schatzki 2008, 112). Thus,

the understanding of a dispersed practice constitutes the meaning of people, objects and contexts. In integrative practices, the dimension of “how things make sense” is arranged by teleoaffective structures, the third element of their organization. They require the understanding of multiple actions: “Within integrative practices, actors not only make sense as Q-ing and as attributing, prompting, and responding to Q-ings, but also as relatedly R-ing, X-ing, and Y-ing (etc.) and as attributing, prompting, and responding to such actions.” (Schatzki 2008, 112) An actor’s actions and inner phenomena acquire the meaning of performing an integrative practice on the basis of her conditions of life that are set by the practice’s teleoaffective structure (Schatzki 2008, 112). Objects acquire “’practical’ meanings” (Schatzki 2008, 113) in practices when they are used to carry out practice-constituting doings and sayings. The meaning of “settings” (Schatzki 2008, 114), understood as places where practices are performed, is fed by all three components of integrative practices’ organization. By conferring “interrelated meanings” (Schatzki 2008, 115) to actors’ actions, actor’s conditions, objects and settings, practices “’constitute worlds’” (Schatzki 2008, 115): They “organize entities into the integrated nexuses that are what reality is and can be for us” (Schatzki 2008, 115). Schatzki notes that intelligibility among participants of social practices is a matter of “degrees” (2008, 116): As practices leave room to act, the intelligibility of participants’ behavior differs so they “might not be fully or equally intelligible to one another” (2008, 116). Full intelligibility is not required as intelligibility is a product of sharing a life form. This is established by performing the common nexus of interwoven dispersed and integrative practices: “[S]omeone is one of us when he participates in our shared field of dispersed practices interwoven into integrative ones.” (Schatzki 2008, 117) In this respect, dispersed practices matter for they contribute “understandings of life conditions” (Schatzki 2008, 117). Integrative practices guarantee social cohesion by providing not only “rules and teleoaffective structures in addition to understandings” (Schatzki 2008, 117) but also “contexts and situations in which people act” (Schatzki 2008, 117). Thus, nexuses of interwoven dispersed and integrative practices constitute independent “we’s” (Schatzki 2008, 117) within societies that resemble each other. Actors may belong to more than one “we”. In sum, this is how the organization of social practices articulates world intelligibility.

The organization of social practices articulates *action intelligibility* by indicating to an actor what actions she should perform. In this context, conditions of life serve as a key concept: By means of signification, life conditions convey action intelligibility in making

actors aware of what makes sense to do and, hence, should be done. While an actor is in conditions of life, it is signified to her what action(s) she should perform under the given circumstances (Schatzki 2008, 121f.). So, the conditions of life that are expressed in the actor's behavior articulate intelligibility: In expressing life conditions, the actor's behavior is an expression of what makes sense to her in the current situation (Schatzki 2008, 121). The implementation of actions that have been signified to the actor happens "automatic" (Schatzki 2008, 122).

Referring to Heidegger, Schatzki distinguishes two elements that structure signification: First, "understanding" (2008, 122) that refers to teleology and, second, "attunement" (2008, 122) that is connoted with affectivity. Due to its teleological element, signification is composed of "'signifying chains'" (Schatzki 2008, 122) that express the directedness of the indicated action(s) at an ultimate end. Attunement, the affective element, expresses "[h]ow things matter" (Schatzki 2008, 123) to an actor in terms of moods, emotions, feelings and affects. Teleology and affectivity do not only signify actions but also explain why an actor performs them: "Together, they lay out why, at a given moment in a particular situation, an actor performs a particular action." (Schatzki 2008, 122) And further: "Teleoaffectivity governs action by shaping what is signified to an actor to do." (Schatzki 2008, 123) In this respect, affectivity prevails over teleology. Signification need not necessarily exhibit both dimensions but may lack teleology: "[T]he thing to do either derives from the actor's ends and projects, given particular states of affairs and how things matter [affectivity *and* teleology, E.T.], or reflects simply how things matter in a given situation [only affectivity, E.T.]." (Schatzki 2008, 123f.) In principle, this is how teleology and affectivity determine an actor's behavior and, thus, articulate action intelligibility.

In the next step, Schatzki questions how the organization of social practices mediates action intelligibility. Integrative practices articulate action intelligibility "when the teleoaffectivities governing behavior conform to the explicit rules and teleoaffective structures that organize these practices" (Schatzki 2008, 124). So, action intelligibility is articulated by integrative practices in specifying an end-directedness, particular affects and certain rules. With regard to the organization of spatiotemporal practices, integrative practices thus articulate action intelligibility through the elements of teleoaffective structures as well as rules and the like. Dispersed practices, on the other hand, articulate action intelligibility through understanding, the first component of practice's or-

ganization. In this context, it is specified through signification by the three characteristics (1a.-1c.) that constitute understanding in dispersed practices: First, signification presupposes "the ability to identify and recognize X-ings" (Schatzki 2008, 124) (1b.) to guarantee that participants understand each other. Second, signification requires "the ability to prompt or respond to X-ings" (Schatzki 2008, 124f.) (1c.) which specifies adequate reactions. Third, signification necessitates "being able to X" (Schatzki 2008, 125) (1a.) for being associated with the "spontaneous" (Schatzki 2008, 125) implementation of signified actions by bodily behavior.

To conclude, from Schatzki's point of view, intelligibility is anchored in social practices for being articulated in (the organization of) social practices. As practices are essentially a social product, Schatzki, consequently, considers intelligibility "a social determination" (2008, 126). Thereby, taking part in a practice is defined as sharing the articulation of action and world intelligibility with others who participate in the same practice (Schatzki 2008, 126). Failure in the articulation of intelligibility is attributed to "the different mixes of practices" (Schatzki 2008, 126) actors take part in that are not shared by all. Finally, Schatzki emphasizes that certain forms of intelligibility like living understanding and practical meanings surpass linguistic expressivity: "[T]he limits of intelligibility are broader than those of language […]. […] The living understanding of these [i.e. life, E.T.] conditions is richer and suppler than what of it can be captured in linguistic formulations." (2008, 128f.) And further: "[B]ecause a vast range of know-how's […] are unformulable, the practical meanings that entities enjoy in the activities underwritten by these know-how's similarly cannot be adequately expressed in words." (Schatzki 2008, 129)

On the whole, this is a rough outline of how Schatzki depicts social practices in his book "Social Practices. A Wittgensteinian Approach to Human Activity and the Social". In this chapter, I aim at demonstrating that pethood and companionship constitute social practices that structurally resemble each other. For this purpose, I consider in detail Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance in the next step of my analysis.

2.3. Wittgenstein's concept of "family resemblance"

In this section, I discuss Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance. This concept fulfills a specific function for my practice-sensitive distinction between pets and companion animals. Thus, I do not present an extensive characterization of family resemblance but rather focus on the aspects relevant for my argument. I proceed in two

steps: First, I interpret the paragraphs 65 till 77 of Wittgenstein's "Philosophical Investigations" (2009 [1953]) that are of interest for my argument. Second, I highlight the implications of applying the concept of family resemblance to the distinction of pethood and companionship as social practices. My reading of Wittgenstein is supported by Hanoch Ben-Yami's (2017) and Hans-Johann Glock's (1996) comments on the matter.

2.3.1. A portrait of family resemblance: "Philosophical Investigations" §65-§77

Commonly, the "Philosophical Investigations" are classified as belonging to Wittgenstein's later works. The book comprises two parts. The first part consists in 693 paragraphs whereas the second part appears to be structured by 14 chapters. Stylistically, Wittgenstein conducts his examination in form of an inner monologue that is framed as a fictive dialogue. By contrast, Glock interprets the text as "a dialogue between Wittgenstein and an interlocutor whose confusions he tries to resolve" (2004, 434).

The passage that culminates in the introduction of family resemblance makes the common essence of language a subject of discussion. This essence, it is suggested, is shared by all sorts of language use, including language-games, as it is constitutive of language. Reconnecting to the "Tractatus", Wittgenstein refers to this notion as "the *general form of the proposition* and of language" (2009, §65)[18]. It is one of the central questions that have bothered Wittgenstein in his early period of philosophizing (Biletzki and Matar 2018; Wittgenstein 2009, §65). In the "Philosophical Investigations", however, Wittgenstein rejects the idea that language possesses a common essence:

> Instead of pointing out something common to all that we call language, I'm saying that these phenomena have no one thing in common in virtue of which we use the same word for all – but there are many different kinds of *affinity* between them. (2009, §65)[19]

Resemblance becomes the central term in defending the thesis that language and other concepts do not possess a common essence. To make this point explicit, Wittgenstein (2009, §66) refers exemplarily to the notion of games. His remarks are depicted in Figure 5. Despite lacking a common denominator, the entire range of games, from board-games to games in sport, exhibits various similarities: "[W]e see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: similarities in the large and

[18] "die *allgemeine Form des Satzes* und der Sprache" (2016a, §65)

[19] "Statt etwas anzugeben, was allem, was wir Sprache nennen, gemeinsam ist, sage ich, es ist diesen Erscheinungen garnicht Eines gemeinsam, weswegen wir für alle das gleiche Wort verwenden, – sondern sie sind miteinander in vielen verschiedenen Weisen *verwandt*." (2016a, §65)

in the small." (Wittgenstein 2009, §66)[20] In Ben-Yami's view, what is at stake here is not that common essences do in principle not exist. Rather, Ben-Yami interprets Wittgenstein to stress "the irrelevance of such a commonality to the use of an expression and therefore to its meaning" (2017, 411). So, one simply cannot count on the existence of a shared common essence that is inherent in all extensions of a concept.

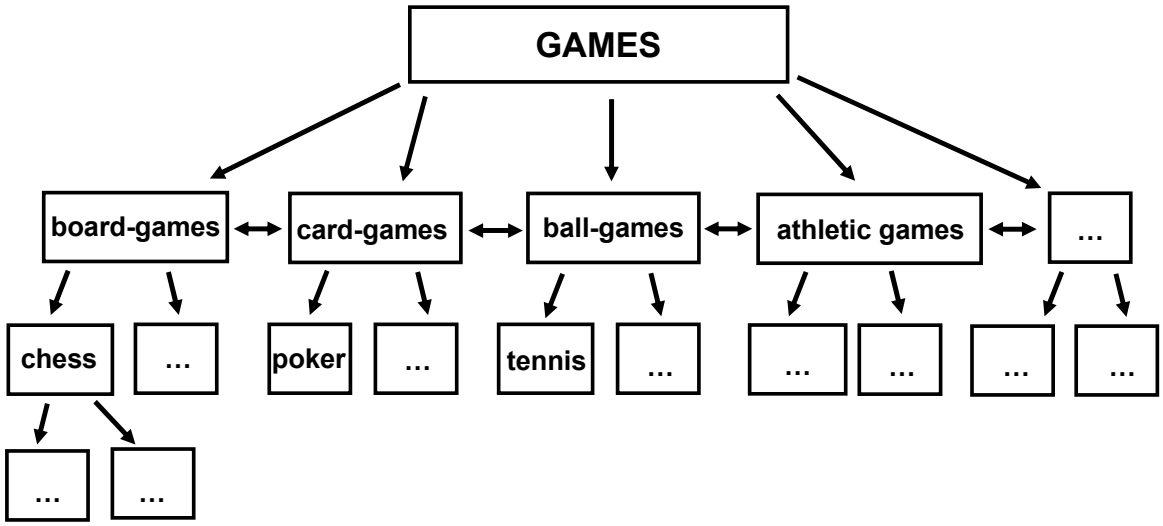

Figure 5: Referring to §66 of the "Philosophical Investigations", the diagram shows how Wittgenstein classifies the concept "games". Individual (classes of) games do not share a common essence but exhibit various similarities.

Wittgenstein specifies his observation of similarities between individual games by coining the concept "family resemblance". The differing games resemble each other like the differing (genetically related) members of a family:

> I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than 'family resemblances'; for the various resemblances between members of a family – build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, and so on and so forth – overlap and criss-cross in the same way. – And I shall say: 'games' form a family. (Wittgenstein 2009, §67)[21]

Exemplary for concepts in general, the concept "game" is depicted using an analogy with a family. The extensions of the concept "game" are perceived as members of the conceptual family "game" that exhibit various similarities. However, none of the members of the family "game" shares some property – i.e. a common essence – with the other family members that would distinguish the family "game" from other conceptual families. Or, as Biletzki and Matar hold, Wittgenstein "points to 'family resemblance' as

[20] "Wir sehen ein kompliziertes Netz von Ähnlichkeiten, die einander übergreifen und kreuzen. Ähnlichkeiten im Großen und Kleinen." (Wittgenstein 2016a, §66)

[21] "Ich kann diese Ähnlichkeiten nicht besser charakterisieren als durch das Wort »Familienähnlichkeiten«; denn so übergreifen und kreuzen sich die verschiedenen Ähnlichkeiten, die zwischen den Gliedern einer Familie bestehen: Wuchs, Gesichtszüge, Augenfarbe, Gang, Temperament, etc. etc. – Und ich werde sagen: die >Spiele< bilden eine Familie." (Wittgenstein 2016a, §67)

the more suitable analogy for the means of connecting particular uses of the same word" (2018). So, the notion of family resemblance refers to the similarities between the extensions of a particular concept, i.e. the different forms or uses "within a *single* concept" (Glock 1996, 122). Thereby, the similarities also imply differences that distinguish one use of a concept from related ones belonging to the same concept.

Subsequent to the rejection of common essences, Wittgenstein (2009, §68ff.) questions how concepts are explained. By the example of the concept "game", Wittgenstein argues that the explanation of a concept does not amount to citing the logical sum[22] of its extensions: Such an explanation would imply that concepts are restricted by clear-cut boundaries which is incompatible with the way we commonly use them (Ben-Yami 2017, 412ff.; Wittgenstein 2009, §68). Wittgenstein does not deny that such boundaries can be set. Rather, Wittgenstein (2009, §69) points out that boundaries of concepts are always drawn to serve a specific purpose. Nevertheless, concepts do *in principle* not possess precise boundaries.[23] Consequently, Wittgenstein considers the concept "game" "a blurred concept" (2009, §71)[24] for being "a concept with blurred edges" (2009, §71)[25]. Ben-Yami refers to this phenomenon as the "vagueness" (2017) of concepts which he attributes to the setting of "indeterminate boundary cases" (2017, 412). A vague concept is a concept that has "cases where its usage and explanation provide reasons for as well as against applying it, without these reasons being sufficient either way" (Ben-Yami 2017, 412). Thus, it is distinctive of vague concepts that their application to practical cases is not in any case clear. Ben-Yami (2017, 412) illustrates this point by the example of color concepts: Although we typically have an ideal case of colors in mind when we apply color concepts, it is at times difficult to classify appearances for they are "hovering" (2017, 412) between colors. Thus, color concepts are vague concepts as they do not possess exact boundaries.

Ben Yami's interpretation of vagueness is further substantiated by Wittgenstein's reflections in §77. In view of the analytic tradition's quest for defining concepts, Wittgenstein uses there an analogy from intending to assign sharp contours to the picture of a

[22] With reference to Armstrong et al. (1983), I spelled out a different version of this point of criticism in the first chapter.

[23] The paragraphs of the "Philosophical Investigations" that I examine do not provide explicit information on whether *all* concepts possess imprecise boundaries. Referring to §68, it appears as if Ben-Yami (2017, 414) opposes the latter view and believes that Wittgenstein also acknowledges the existence of concepts with exact boundaries. I disagree: According to my reading of §68, Wittgenstein argues that all concepts have inexact boundaries.

[24] "ein verschwommener Begriff" (2016a, §71)

[25] "ein Begriff mit verschwommenen Rändern" (2016a, §71)

blurred red rectangle. Wittgenstein argues that it is virtually impossible to accomplish this task as the blurred rectangle can assume numerous forms in being sharpened: "'Here I might just as well draw a circle as a rectangle or a heart, for all the colours merge. Anything – and nothing – is right.'" (2009, §77)[26] Complicating matters further, the same limits are faced in the process of sharpening scientific concepts: "And this is the position in which, for example, someone finds himself in ethics or aesthetics when he looks for definitions that correspond to our concepts." (Wittgenstein 2009, §77)[27] Due to vagueness, it is simply impossible to define concepts sharply beyond all doubts. To demonstrate that vague concepts are nonetheless meaningful, Wittgenstein (2009, §71) refers to an example of common parlance: A speaker asks another person to stay in an area that she marks by a pointing gesture. Wittgenstein stresses that this request possesses meaning even though it does not delimit the spot by clear-cut borders and, as such, qualifies as a vague linguistic expression. In this context, Ben-Yami's comments further illuminate vagueness. First, Ben-Yami (2017, 409) refers to §43 where Wittgenstein equates the meaning of a concept with its use: "[T]he meaning of a word is its use in the language." (Wittgenstein 2009, §43)[28] On this basis, Ben-Yami argues that "to have a meaning is, for Wittgenstein, to have a use" (2017, 413). According to Ben-Yami's interpretation of Wittgenstein, the crux of the matter is that the use of concepts in language is bound to specific purposes. So, the use of vague concepts is meaningful as long as it succeeds in fulfilling the purpose that the speaker has in mind:

> We call something 'inexact' if it attains its goal less perfectly than does the more exact, so whether an explanation or description is exact depends on our goal. […] So to the extent that talk about exactness makes sense, the use of vague concepts is no obstacle to exactness, for we can use them to attain our goal as perfectly as we need […]. (Ben-Yami 2017, 413)

Or, as Wittgenstein put it in the paragraph Ben-Yami is referring to: "And that is to say that what is inexact attains its goal less perfectly than does what is more exact. So it all depends on what we call 'the goal'." (Wittgenstein 2009, §88)[29]

In the next step, Wittgenstein argues that not only the use but also the explanation of concepts does not presuppose that exact boundaries of concepts are set. In the same

[26] "»Hier könnte ich ebenso gut einen Kreis wie ein Rechteck oder eine Herzform zeichnen; es fließen ja alle Farben durcheinander. Es stimmt alles; und nichts.«" (2016a, §77)
[27] "Und in dieser Lage befindet sich z.B. der, der in der Aesthetik [sic!, E.T.] oder Ethik nach Definitionen sucht, die unseren Begriffen entsprechen." (Wittgenstein 2016a, §77)
[28] "Die Bedeutung eines Wortes ist sein Gebrauch in der Sprache." (Wittgenstein 2016a, §43)
[29] "Und das heißt doch: das Unexakte erreicht sein Ziel nicht so vollkommen wie das Exaktere. Da kommt es also auf das an, was wir »das Ziel« nennen." (Wittgenstein 2016a, §88)

way it is meaningful to point to a certain area and ask someone to stay there, it is meaningful to explain a concept by giving examples of its extensions (Wittgenstein 2009, §71). As concepts are vague, one can only explain a concept by quoting examples of it: “And this is just how one might explain what a game is. One gives examples and intends them to be taken in a particular way. […] Here giving examples is not an *indirect* way of explaining – in default of a better one.” (Wittgenstein 2009, §71)[30] The crucial point of explaining concepts is the following: In contrast to Tractatarian thinking, giving examples is not understood as referring to the logical sum of all extensions but rather as presenting exemplary instances of a certain concept. The revolutionary potential of Wittgenstein’s approach is not to be underestimated. After all, it rejects the common essentialist notion that concepts can be explained on the basis of common essences by an exhaustive list of necessary and/or sufficient criteria. Instead, it is suggested that explaining concepts requires reference to a selection of examples that are suited to illustrate the concepts in question. Thus, Wittgenstein’s model of explaining concepts breaks with the institution of analytic definitions, which are considered one of the cornerstones of the prevalent analytic tradition in philosophy (Ben-Yami 2017; Biletzki and Matar 2018; Glock 1996, 120).

2.3.2. Family resemblance at work

In the last section, I roughly sketched Wittgenstein’s notion of family resemblance. However, what implications does this concept have for distinguishing pethood and companionship as social practices? In my opinion, there are, at least, three points of particular importance. The first point concerns vagueness: As I see it, pethood and companionship are *vague concepts*. With regard to the detailed but not exhausting discussion of criteria in chapter one, it can be assumed that pethood and companionship exhibit indeterminate boundaries. As a consequence, it is not possible to draw up an exhaustive list of necessary and/or sufficient criteria to define these practices. The second point concerns explanation: As pethood and companionship possess indeterminate boundaries, these practices are most reasonably *explained by means of examples*. Due to vagueness, the use of concepts in ethics can and does not rely on sharp definitions that are free of doubts. Instead, a definition of pethood and companionship in terms of an explanation requires reference to concrete examples. The third relevant

[30] “Und gerade so erklärt man etwa, was ein Spiel ist. Man gibt Beispiele und will, daß sie in einem gewissen Sinn verstanden werden. […] Das Exemplifizieren ist hier nicht ein *indirektes* Mittel der Erklärung, – in Ermanglung eines Bessern.“ (Wittgenstein 2016a, §71)

point concerns family resemblance: I argue that pethood and companionship need to be recognized as *family resemblance concepts*. Beyond a doubt, this is a controversial thesis. Therefore, in what follows, I consider and justify it in detail.

First of all, what exactly does it mean to consider pethood and companionship family resemblance concepts? In the context of my analysis, "family resemblance" signifies that pethood and companionship resemble each other structurally as well as materially. The case of pethood and companionship possesses the same structure as Wittgenstein's paradigmatic example "games": Analogous to the large number of games, social practices in the fellowship of humans and animals build a conceptual family. Its structure is depicted in Figure 6. What concerns an umbrella term, I suggest to name the family "human-animal fellowship". Pethood and companionship are members of this family. Although it is quite possible that other, hitherto unknown, family members exist, they are beyond the field of interest of my thesis.[31]

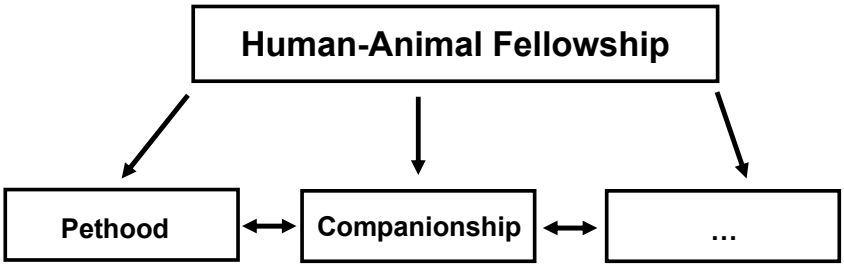

Figure 6: The diagram reconstructs how the conceptual family of the family members "pethood" and "companionship" is structured.

So, pethood and companionship constitute members of the same conceptual family. As such, they do not share a common essence but exhibit a complex web of close resemblances which are referred to as "family resemblances". The numerous *similarities* imply that there are also differences between pethood and companionship. Similarities and differences do not only concern the structure but also the content of these social practices. On the whole, that is how pethood and companionship are conceived of as family resemblance concepts.[32]

According to Glock, it could be objected at this point by the example of the concept "game" that Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance is "incoherent" (1996, 122).

[31] For instance, another possible candidate could be the "use as a resource". However, it could be objected that the instrumentalization that accompanies the use of animals might thwart sincere fellowship. Thus, I leave this matter aside to be settled at a later date.

[32] Following Nicolini, practice theory can be identified as another instance of a family resemblance concept. After all, Nicolini holds that "all practice theories belong to the same family" (2013, 9) and, as such, "share a series of family resemblances" (2013, 9). So, the theoretical frame "practice theory" builds a conceptual family whereas the individual accounts of practice theory constitute members of that family.

“Game”, so the argument goes, “is not a univocal term, but has *different*, albeit related, meanings” (Glock 1996, 122). Hence, family resemblance would not consist in similarities “within a *single* concept” (Glock 1996, 122) but rather similarities between two or more related concepts. Referring back to Figure 5, this would imply that each of the distinguished classes of games (board-games and the like) is not subsumed under the family “games”, but builds an independent family on its own. Correspondingly, pethood and companionship would not belong to the family “human-animal fellowship” depicted in Figure 6, but would rather constitute two distinct conceptual families. Glock admits that Wittgenstein has countered this claim by explicating that family resemblance does not denote “a family of meanings, but family resemblances within a *single* concept” (1996, 122). Still, he is not entirely convinced that Wittgenstein has thereby proven the coherence of family resemblance as a concept. Glock notices that “Wittgenstein himself occasionally suggests that family-resemblance concepts evolve around one or more ‘centres of variation’, paradigmatic cases such as football in the case of ‘game’, to which we relate other cases on different grounds” (1996, 122f.). On this basis, family resemblance could be located next to the notion of cluster definitions (Glock 1996, 123). However, Glock (1996, 123) believes that Wittgenstein would not entirely approve of such a connection. I do not share Glock’s concerns regarding the coherence of family resemblance. Nevertheless, even if it turned out that family resemblance concepts should better be conceived of as clusters, my argument would not be refuted: In this case, pethood and companionship would be conceived of as sharing several structural and material similarities. To uncover these practices, the investigation would focus on criteria they have in common and criteria that distinguish them without expecting the results to be exhaustive. For this reason, I stick to the structure presented in Figure 6 that portrays pethood and companionship as members of the same conceptual family “human-animal fellowship”.

Acting as the devil’s advocate, Glock poses another difficulty for the justification of my thesis that pethood and companionship constitute family resemblance concepts. According to Glock’s interpretation of Wittgenstein, not *every* concept can be considered a family resemblance concept: “In any event, Wittgenstein did not propound the view that *all* concepts are family-resemblance concepts.” (1996, 123) This reading of Wittgenstein is endorsed by Ben-Yami (2017, 412). So, it can be assumed that not all concepts are family resemblance concepts. Evidently, this finding entails the following crucial question: *What makes a concept a family resemblance concept?*

Building on Ben-Yami's (2017) work, a compelling case can be made for considering pethood and companionship family resemblance concepts. It would be self-contradictory to justify the methodological tools elaborated to outgrow essentialist approaches to distinguish pets and companion animals by essentialist means. Hence, what is at stake here is not ascertaining which necessary and/or sufficient conditions a concept needs to fulfill to qualify as a family resemblance concept.

Ben-Yami's first argument for considering a concept a family resemblance concept is put forward in the context of his remarks on family resemblance. There, he determines family resemblance concepts as follows: "A family-resemblance concept *has to be explained* by means of examples or instances." (Ben-Yami 2017, 415) So, a concept qualifies as a family resemblance concept if it can solely be explained through examples. I have demonstrated that Wittgenstein justifies reference to examples as a legitimate mode of explaining concepts with the case of games: "And this is just how one might explain what a game is. One gives examples and intends them to be taken in a particular way. […] Here giving examples is not an *indirect* way of explaining – in default of a better one." (2009, §71)[33] It is crucially important to note that the concept "game" is not only a paradigm for family resemblance concepts but also for vague concepts. From my interpretative point of view, what is at stake here is not so much the "family resemblance-ness" but rather the "vague-ness" of the concept "game". In other words, that the concept "game" can only be explained through examples is not attributed to being a family resemblance concept but to being a vague concept. Thus, family resemblance concepts can only be explained through examples for being vague. Besides, I have pointed out that it is unclear whether Wittgenstein acknowledges the existence of concepts with exact boundaries. Assuming that only vague concepts exist, all concepts would qualify as family resemblance concepts for being explicable through examples. Obviously, the requirement that a concept needs to be explained by means of examples to be considered a family resemblance concept is imprecise.

A second argument for considering a concept a family resemblance concept can be deduced from Ben-Yami's discussion of vagueness. By means of the example of colors, he distinguishes vague concepts from family resemblance concepts as follows:

> However, color concepts are not family-resemblance ones: they do not have a *plurality* of criteria or of dimensions of resemblance that determine their application. A family-

[33] "Und gerade so erklärt man etwa, was ein Spiel ist. Man gibt Beispiele und will, daß sie in einem gewissen Sinn verstanden werden. […] Das Exemplifizieren ist hier nicht ein *indirektes* Mittel der Erklärung, – in Ermanglung eines Bessern." (2016a, §71)

> resemblance concept, on the other hand, need not admit of a prototypical sample by means of which its application could be determined. So family-resemblance concepts, although typically vague, are but *one kind* of vague concepts. (Ben-Yami 2017, 412)

In this passage, family resemblance concepts are depicted as a subset of vague concepts. A corresponding diagram is presented in Figure 7. The broader set of vague concepts like colors is perceived as possessing "a prototypical sample by means of which its application could be determined" (Ben-Yami 2017, 412). So, the use of a vague concept presupposes an ideal case that is meant to guide the concept's application. That these cases frequently fail to fulfill their purpose has already been pointed out. Family resemblance concepts, on the other hand, are associated with exhibiting "a *plurality* of criteria or of dimensions of resemblance that determine their application" (Ben-Yami 2017, 412). Unlike vague concepts, which have only one criterion guiding their application, family resemblance concepts possess a whole series of similar criteria. The individual criteria of a family resemblance concept resemble traits of at least one other concept that belongs to the same conceptual family. So, the *possession of criteria that resemble the criteria of other members of the same conceptual family* is a valid and compelling reason to consider a concept a family resemblance concept.

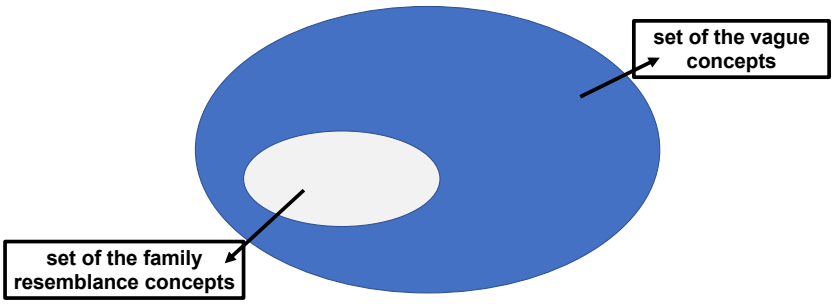

Figure 7: Following Wittgenstein, Ben-Yami (2017, 412) depicts the set of the family resemblance concepts as a subset of the set of the vague concepts.

On the basis of this requirement, the crucial question is whether pethood and companionship qualify as family resemblance concepts. I argue that there are structural as well as material reasons to consider pethood and companionship family resemblance concepts. With regard to structural aspects, pethood and companionship exhibit crucial similar features. First, they belong to the conceptual family "human-animal fellowship" as members of equal value. Second, both constitute social practices that bear a high degree of complexity. Thus, pethood as well as companionship constitute what Schatzki has termed "integrative practices". As such, they have the same structure: Due to their organization as integrative practices, both exhibit shared understandings, certain rules and the like as well as a teleoaffective structure. Moreover, pethood and

companionship also share material similarities. In the first chapter, I have presented numerous material properties commonly ascribed to pets/pethood and companion animals/companionship. Most of them are associated with *both* practices. Thus, the detailed discussion of these traits suggests that pethood and companionship also exhibit a plurality of similar material criteria. For these reasons, pethood and companionship need to be acknowledged as family resemblance concepts.

What practical implications does it have to consider pethood and companionship family resemblance concepts? In my opinion, the implications primarily concern the explanation of pethood and companionship as social practices. To illustrate this point, I draw an analogy with Wittgenstein's paradigmatic example of the conceptual family "game" (Figure 5). In Wittgenstein's view, the concept "game" is explained by referring to differing extensions of the concept. Hence, one explains to another person what a game is by giving her examples of different classes of games like board-games, card-games, ball-games and the like. In the next step, each class of game is explained by citing different games that fall within that class. For instance, one explains the class of "ball-games" by naming examples like tennis, soccer, golf and so on. Likewise, the conceptual family "human-animal fellowship" (Figure 6) is explained by giving examples of its extensions. Thus, the umbrella term "human-animal fellowship" is explained by putting forward extensions like the social practices of pethood and companionship. However, the crux of the matter concerns the explanation of these individual practices. An explanation of individual practices is achieved as follows: *As family resemblance concepts, pethood and companionship are explained by citing exemplary criteria that they share with other resembling practices of human-animal fellowship*. The explanation of family resemblance concepts implies two important points. First, the explanation is anti-essentialist: It does not claim to provide, or even aim at providing, an exhaustive list of criteria of the social practice in question. Even less, the cited criteria are classified as either necessary and/or sufficient conditions. Second, the pursued explanation of social practices particularly refers to *material* similarities and differences of a certain practice with resembling ones. These similarities and differences are the object of my investigation in the third part of my thesis.

2.4. Synthesis: pethood and companionship as resembling social practices

Finally, I justify the thesis that pethood and companionship constitute structurally resembling practices by synthesizing my findings. I proceed in two steps: In the first step,

I give detailed reasons for considering pethood and companionship social practices. In the second step, I use the concept of family resemblance to substantiate the argument that pethood and companionship are structurally resembling practices.

I begin with step one. I argue that pethood and companionship are social practices as they perfectly fit to the description of social practices presented in this chapter. In the context of examining the notion of social practice, I have suggested the following working definition of social practices: *A practice is the composition of numerous simple actions performed by (a) human(s) that are unified by aiming at some end and thereby confer meaning to the overall activity*. Obviously, this characteristic applies to pethood and companionship. First, humans are leading actors in both forms of interacting with animal fellows. At this point, it could be objected with reference to posthumanist practice approaches that animals do not play a passive role in these interactions but possess a certain degree of agency. Second, pethood and companionship comprise a large number of simple actions that acquire meaning in conjunction and aim at some – hitherto unknown – end.

On the basis of this argument, it is likely that pethood and companionship also exhibit other traits that are commonly associated with social practices. However, social practices can in principle not be defined by means of an exhaustive list of necessary and/or sufficient criteria. Thus, pethood and companionship need not possess all characteristics that are related with social practices. In my opinion, *at least* the following features are relevant for portraying pethood and companionship as social practices. First of all, it can be expected that pethood and companionship are *historically and culturally contingent*. Thus, they might embody different forms in different times, different places and differing cultural contexts. That entails two consequences for the scientific study of pethood and companionship: First, a certain degree of sensitivity is required on part of the researcher to be able to identify different appearances as forms of pethood or companionship. Second, the researcher has to resist the temptation of unifying the observed forms of pethood and companionship. Instead, she needs to retain their diversity by means of thick descriptions of the individual cases. I move on to the second feature of pethood and companionship: According to practices' organization, the agent acquires a *practical understanding* in performing pethood and companionship that is shared with other participants. Thereby, a *scope of individual action* is established that depends on the organization of pethood and companionship. Thus, the educated participant knows which actions qualify as performances of pethood resp. companionship

without having been taught every single one of them. Further, owing to the organization, certain actions can become routine in the performance of pethood and companionship. The third feature is that pethood and companionship are mediated by material objects. So, several *artefacts* might be required or involved in carrying these practices out. Fourth, it has to be noted that pethood and companionship *co-constitute agents socially*. For children, who are growing up with animal fellows, pethood and companionship present an additional setting to constitute their expressive body, mind and self. For older participants, pethood and companionship offer – among other practices – a setting to alter and perpetuate their body, mind and self. Thus, the significance of pethood and companionship for the social constitution and perpetuation of their participants may not be neglected. Fifth, pethood and companionship can either belong to the category of dispersed or integrative practices. Clearly, as both forms of interacting with animal fellows constitute complex activities, they do not represent dispersed practices. Rather, pethood and companionship are *integrative practices* that exhibit on account of their organization shared understandings, certain rules and the like as well as a peculiar teleoaffective structure. Sixth, Schatzki draws attention to the fact that integrative practices are "constitutive of particular domains of social life" (2008, 98). So, the development and transformation of practices constantly shapes existing spheres of the social. Equally, the development of pethood and companionship as distinct practices has modified the corresponding social field of "pet keeping". By the constitution of pethood and companionship as independent spheres, the social field that concerns accompanying animals has been shaken to its very foundations. As a result, the former field of "pet keeping" stands in need of a new name. I have suggested to refer to this social field, that henceforth houses pethood as well as companionship, as "human-animal fellowship". The final feature of pethood and companionship concerns a terminological issue. Schatzki (2008, 104) has pointed out that the use of a distinct term for the corresponding nexus of activities contributes to the perpetuation of an integrative practice. Thus, the use of the distinct terms "pet" and "companion animal" fulfills a crucial function in affirming and perpetuating the corresponding integrative practices. This point conforms with the main objective of my thesis: By fostering the conceptual distinction between pets and companion animals, I intend to reveal the existence of pethood and companionship as distinct social practices. On the whole, it can be concluded that pethood and companionship constitute social practices.

In the remaining part of this section, I demonstrate that pethood and companionship

are structurally resembling practices as they constitute family resemblance concepts. I have ascertained that a concept qualifies as a family resemblance concept if it possesses criteria that resemble the criteria of other concepts belonging to the same conceptual family. Pethood and companionship constitute family resemblance concepts for both practices exhibit crucial structural as well as material similarities. First, I consider the structural aspect. There are three reasons why pethood and companionship have to be recognized as structurally resembling practices. First, both are members of equal value that belong to the conceptual family of “human-animal fellowship” which houses social practices in the fellowship of humans and animals. Second, both practices are explained by citing exemplary criteria that they share with related practices, especially with each other. All of these criteria are neither necessary nor sufficient for pethood resp. companionship. Third, pethood and companionship are integrative practices that exhibit the same structure. Due to their organization, both comprise the formal structure of shared understandings, similar rules and the like as well as a teleoaffective structure. Thus, I have justified the main thesis of the present chapter that pethood and companionship constitute *structurally* resembling social practices.

However, there is another reason to consider pethood and companionship family resemblance concepts that concerns the material dimension. This point attaches to the discussion of criteria in the first chapter, where I have discovered that numerous material properties are equally associated with pethood and companionship. Given their close resemblance, it can be assumed that pethood and companionship constitute integrative practices that “overlap” (Schatzki 2008, 104) considerably. As such, pethood and companionship exhibit substantial material similarities that concern constitutive understandings, rules and the like as well as teleoaffective structures. It is the object of my investigation in the final chapter to ascertain *which* understandings, rules and the like as well as teleoaffective structures pethood and companionship share. The result that pethood and companionship constitute overlapping social practices entails that there are not only material similarities, but also differences between them. So, the differences between pethood and companionship also become a central subject of my discussion in the next chapter. To conclude, the use of pethood and companionship as family resemblance concepts implies that the criteria of both practices show a range of structural and material similarities as well as material differences.

The lesson the later Wittgenstein teaches us for distinguishing pets and companion animals is an anti-essentialist one: We cannot expect to elaborate an exhaustive

checklist of necessary and/or sufficient criteria that can be used to determine whether a being is a pet or a companion animal. Due to conceptual vagueness, it is in principle impossible to define the concepts used in ethics as sharply as the analytic tradition intends to. The best we can do to define concepts is explaining them by means of examples. This main thrust is reflected in Wittgenstein's comments on the narration of buying five red apples that I have portrayed as paradigm of moral individualistic thinking in the first chapter. In this narration, Wittgenstein anticipates the limits of traditional attempts to define concepts like "five", "red" and "apple" and indicates that the meaning of a concept merges in use: "Well, I assume that he [the shopkeeper, E.T.] *acts* as I have described. Explanations come to an end somewhere. – But what is the meaning of the word 'five'? – No such thing was in question here, only how the word 'five' is used." (2009, §1)[34] On the whole, we can no longer trust in checklists, whether we like it or not. Instead, we need to face the fact that due to vagueness there is no other way to explain concepts than giving examples of their extensions. Therefore, in the third chapter, the concepts "pet" and "companion animal" are explained by referring to exemplary properties that characterize the corresponding social practices.

The Wittgensteinian methodological approach I have elaborated to distinguish pets and companion animals necessarily involves a certain degree of vagueness. Neither can I nor do I intend to present a, supposedly, exhaustive description of a pet and a companion animal as the end product of my thesis. Rather, I seek to present exemplary properties that are commonly associated with the pet/pethood and the companion animal/companionship. In view of the failure of traditional essentialist attempts to define concepts, we have no other alternative than facing and tolerating this vagueness. In fact, the inherent vagueness does not render my account vulnerable or weak but endows it with an enormous potential: Owing to the very same vagueness, my approach possesses the susceptibility to a diversity of individual cases and contexts that practice theories aspire.

[34] "Nun, ich nehme an, er [der Kaufmann, E.T.] *handelt*, wie ich es beschrieben habe. Die Erklärungen haben irgendwo ein Ende. – Was ist aber die Bedeutung des Wortes »fünf«? – Von einer solchen war hier garnicht [sic!, E.T.] die Rede; nur davon, wie das Wort »fünf« gebraucht wird." (2016a, §1)

3. Pet vs. companion animal 2.0: the focus on practice(s)

In the final part, I justify the thesis that pets and companion animals are distinguished by the emphasis of different material aspects that characterize the corresponding social practices. Thus, this chapter is dedicated to the material dimension of family resemblance between the social practices of pethood and companionship. In the first step, I analyze material similarities and differences between pethood and companionship and finally draw a distinction between pets and companion animals that builds on the notion of social practices. Essentially, I demonstrate that pethood and companionship focus on and emphasize different material aspects. In the second step, I present empirical findings to substantiate the suggested distinction between pets and companion animals. These findings associate pethood and companionship with differing stances on part of the human. In the last step, I synthesize my findings and point a Wittgensteinian way to a possible explanation for the phenomenon of humans' changing attitudes to animal fellows.

3.1. Distinction anew: the Wittgensteinian practice-oriented model

In this section, I first explore the material similarities and differences between the social practices of pethood and companionship. On the basis of this analysis, I subsequently draw a conceptual distinction between pets and companion animals. It is beyond the limits of my thesis to explore moral implications that could follow from this distinction.

3.1.1. Material analysis of pethood and companionship

So far, I have depicted pethood and companionship as structurally resembling social practices. However, resemblance is not limited to the structure but also concerns the content of both practices. Referring to the terms "pet" and "companion animal", Nicholson holds: "Sometimes we can use these terms interchangeably, but each also has its own particular nuance." (1995, 2) So, it is indicated that pethood and companionship share a common core but emphasize different material aspects.

The material dimension of the status of pet and companion animal has already been made a subject of discussion in the first part of my thesis. There, I have pointed out that moral individualists construe the subject matter of human-animal fellowship as intrinsic, i.e. capacity-based, properties of the pet and the companion animal herself. My criticism has uncovered these as extrinsic, i.e. relation-based, properties that are embedded within social practices. Wrye's (2009) contribution has been of particular

importance for the practice-sensitive approach I develop to distinguish pets and companion animals. The crux of Wrye's argument is that the human emotions and actions required to establish animal fellow-constituting relations are bundled and structured by social practices.[35] In the second part of my thesis, I have identified pethood and companionship as integrative social practices. Hence, the organization (Figure 4) of pethood and companionship determines what emotions and actions establish pet-constituting and companion animal-constituting relations. The emotional component is specified by pethood's and companionship's teleoaffective structure (Figure 4: 3.). Actions relate to understandings (Figure 4: 1.) as well as explicit rules, principles, precepts, and instructions (Figure 4: 2.).

Consequently, the properties specified in the first part of my thesis have, at least, *three sides*. First, they are *extrinsic, i.e. relational, properties* of human-animal fellow relations. Second, the properties prove to be *properties of the social practices of pethood and companionship* rather than intrinsic properties of the pet or companion animal herself. What is more, third, the specified properties also constitute *social practices themselves*. Take the property of being given a name. The view that the activity of naming an entity constitutes a social practice is shared by several authors. For instance, du Toit refers to "the practice of giving animal research subjects proper names" (2020, 1). Also, Phillips regards naming as "a social practice that creates meaning […] of narrative coherence, which forms the essence of biography" (1994, 119). As being given a name constitutes a practice that displays a high level of complexity, I classify it as an integrative practice. In what follows, I seek to specify the organization of this practice with reference to relevant literature. In Figure 4, I have summarized that the organization of integrative practices comprises, first, understandings, second, explicit rules, principles, precepts, instructions and, third, teleoaffective structures. To begin with, I elucidate the *understandings* inherent in the practice of being given a name. Borkfelt highlights that a name "enables us to talk or write about something in specific terms" (2011, 117). So, by using a particular name, we know that we refer to a certain being.

[35] Following Wrye (2009), animal fellows engage in social practices with humans and are constituted as participants in these practices by humans. This view complies with the main premise of practice theory in perceiving social practices primarily as human activities. Building on Wrye (2009, 1049), human-animal fellowship presupposes a certain degree of responsiveness and interactivity of both parties. Rather than playing a passive role, the animal fellow is acknowledged as a participating other. This view is confirmed by Irvine and Cilia who believe that "current research reveals how pets actively reshape everyday family practices" (2017, 4). In this respect, the practice-oriented approach to distinguish pets and companion animals also exhibits a posthumanist element.

As such, being given a name constitutes “a necessity for language and communication” (Borkfelt 2011, 123): Having a name is a basic requirement not only for direct communication *with* an entity but also for any communication *about* the entity (DeMello 2012, 149). Yet, Borkfelt also exposes naming as an expression of “inequality and dominance” (2011, 119) as it “reflects the worldview of the one who names rather than the view of what is named” (2011, 119). Another dimension of understandings concerns the constitution of a named entity as a self. Hamington interprets a name as a “sign of respect” (2017, 58): Hamington holds that the use of a name indicates “the acknowledgement of an embodied will” (2017, 58) that the named entity possesses. On account of these understandings inherent in the practice of being given a name, it is no surprise that researches frequently consider it inappropriate to name laboratory animals. According to Phillips, many researchers perceive laboratory animals as “ontologically different from other animals” (1994, 134) and believe that they are not “warranted names and emotional attachments” (1994, 134) like “pets” (1994, 134). Based on the immanent understandings, the laboratory animal is excluded from participating in the practice of being given a name. The complex of *explicit rules* is the second element of integrative practices’ organization. Such regulations concern the act of naming an entity on the one hand and the use of the given name on the other hand. For instance, being given a name implies that the entity in question is solely referred to in terms of the chosen name. The third element of integrative practices’ organization is *teleoaffective structures* that includes teleology and affectivity. Clearly, it is the telos of the practice of being given a name to be able to refer to an individual being. Borkfelt’s (2011, 121f.) reflections reveal that naming an entity may not only constitute her individuality and personality but also testifies to her specialness for humans. Special closeness is expressed by giving an animal a human name (Borkfelt 2011, 121f.). Practicing veterinarian Becker endorses the view that individuality lies at the core of naming animals. He advises his colleagues to pose the following question at the first appointment with new clients: “’What’s the story behind your pet’s name?’” (Becker 2013, 10) Following Becker, the individuality of an animal fellow is constituted by the meaning of her name: “When you combine the name with the story, each pet is as unique as DNA.” (2013, 10) Concurringly, Harris insists that the name of a pet serves as a constant reminder of her individuality: “Pet names […] are full of meaning. They are *living* metaphors: Teacup, the runt of a litter who would ‘fit in a teacup’; […] or Scotch, a salamander who likes to perch on his ‘hot’ rock (hence, ‘Scotch on the Rocks’).” (1998,

144) In this respect, Harris believes that pet names fulfill a function that human names have lost: “Ironically, Mary, Bob, John, Jim, and Stacey are generic and anonymous, while the names of pets are individual and have been chosen by their owners to ‘fit,’ to match the animal's temperament or appearance […].” (1998, 144) Phillips adds another dimension by identifying the social construction of the individual’s very own biography as the ultimate purpose of naming an animal fellow:

> [B]iographies are produced through the work of social interaction, and a proper name is a virtually indispensable tool for the production of biography. […] In giving an animal a name and using that name to talk to and about the creature, we interactively construct a narrative about an individual with unique characteristics, situated in a particular historical setting, and we endow that narrative with a coherent meaning. (1994, 121)

In sum, the animal fellow’s name seeks to capture her individuality that distinguishes her from other individuals. Consequently, the telos of the practice of naming animals is to be able to refer to and address an individual entity. What concerns affectivity, in the discourse, naming animals is frequently linked with an emotional bond. For instance, Borkfelt holds that giving an animal a name “is often an expression of fondness” (2011, 122). Also, Phillips ascribes researchers’ refusal to name laboratory animals to the conviction that naming would establish an emotional bond with the animals: “Understandably, many researchers sought to distance themselves emotionally from animals they were about to kill. They saw a direct connection between naming animals and developing emotional ties to them.” (1994, 132) So much about the organization of the integrative practice of naming animals. In conclusion, the properties specified in the first part of my thesis are extrinsic, i.e. relational, properties as well as sub-practices of pethood and companionship. Therefore, the social practices of pethood and companionship constitute assemblages of manifold sub-practices.

So, what, then, is the material dimension of pethood and companionship? Actually, the answer is quite simple: Pethood and companionship consist of the selection of properties that I have presented in the first part (chapter 1.3.), the properties observed by Serpell (1.4.3.) and, beyond, countless properties that have not been made a subject of discussion in this thesis. These properties constitute the material common core of pethood and companionship. In the next section, I distinguish pets and companion animals on the basis of this material specification of pethood and companionship.

3.1.2. Drawing a distinction without drawing a line

With reference to the Wittgensteinian notion of family resemblance, I have identified

pethood and companionship as resembling social practices. As such, they bear numerous structural and material similarities. What distinguishes pethood and companionship is that both practices emphasize different material facets. I argue that **pethood** and, consequently, the **pet** is **more** related to the **status of property, domination** and **usefulness in terms of functionality**. By contrast, **companionship** and, consequently, the **companion animal** is **more** connoted with the complex of **affection, reciprocity** and **companionship/friendship**. Human interactions with pets and companion animals are particularly molded by the identified facets that constitute the core of the corresponding social practices. Precisely this is the practice-sensitive distinction I draw between pets and companion animals. My distinction is not a normative but a conceptual one: It is beyond the limits of my thesis to explore what moral implications could follow from it. Although I consider emphasis of the differing facets necessary, the individual facets do not constitute necessary and/or sufficient criteria that a being has to fulfill to be a pet or companion animal. After all, pethood and companionship solely *emphasize* different material facets and are *more related* than its counterpart to the respective facets. This can be seen, for instance, in the fact that also most companion animals have the legal status of property, are dominated by humans in various respects and can serve certain practical functions. Reversely, to a certain degree also many pets receive affection, take part in reciprocal relations and are, occasionally, regarded as companions. As a consequence, the practice-sensitive distinction between pets and companion animals is necessarily a vague one.

My distinction implies that some properties more likely tend to be associated with the pet or the companion animal than with its counterpart. The nexus of likely associations is summarized in Figure 8. However, the presented associations solely depict *tendencies* and, hence, are by no means necessary. First, I discuss the category of pet. Human relations with pets are essentially shaped by the animal's property status, the ways her life is dominated by humans and her use for practical purposes. On account of this accentuation, human-pet interactions also tend to focus on other facets that center on human control over the animal. For instance, this can apply to the properties of being dependent on humans, living as a domesticated being, at times captivated, in the owner's domicile and the fact that the animal has been acquired deliberately by her owner. Human relations with companion animals, on the other hand, put emphasis on affection, reciprocity and companionship/friendship. Due to this prioritization, human interactions with companion animals are likely to stress other facets that relate to the

emotional bond. For instance, this can include the properties of valuing the animal's individual personality and engaging in verbal communication with her. Beyond that, other facets are likely to be equally associated with pets and companion animals. For instance, this can hold for the properties of not being eaten, being given a name, discontinuity or being kept by an individual of a different species, being tame and having variable status.

PET	COMPANION ANIMAL
property status	affection
domination	reciprocity
usefulness: functionality	companionship/friendship
dependency	personality
domesticated	verbal communication
captivated	
domicile	
deliberately acquired	
not eaten	
given a name	
discontinuity	
kept by an individual of a different species	
tame	
variable status	

Figure 8: The material core that distinguishes pets and companion animals implies that a nexus of other properties tends to be more likely – but not necessarily – associated with each category.

To clarify methodological matters with regard to my practice-sensitive distinction between pets and companion animals once and for all: I consider the material core of each practice – which centers around human control in pethood and the emotional bond in companionship – necessary. Notwithstanding that, the individual material facets of each core do not constitute necessary and/or sufficient criteria for the status of pet or companion animal. Also, the properties of both practices and the nexus of properties that tends to be associated with each practice's core are neither necessary nor sufficient for the respective practice. This holds true for all properties and associations listed above as well as for other ones that have not been mentioned. Instead, the presented properties and associations are solely exemplary. What concerns the associations that are summarized in Figure 8, they solely depict likely tendencies. Moreover, all properties and associations of pethood and companionship are in principle not exhaustive: Each practice can exhibit a property that has not occurred before and characterizes only one particular human-animal relation. For the reasons stated above, the

boundaries between pets and companion animals are necessarily vague.

How, then, does the practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals connect to Wittgenstein's thinking? Actually, the key to connectivity is Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance. My distinction regards pethood and companionship as resembling social practices that belong to the family of practices by the name of "human-animal fellowship". Due to resting on the notion of family resemblance, my distinction is a prototype view of feature theory. As such, it draws on the material resemblance of pethood's and companionship's properties but abandons along with essentialism the use of necessary and/or sufficient criteria. Family resemblance is by no means incompatible with material specification. On the contrary, the similarities implied by family resemblance fundamentally concern the material dimension. Take Wittgenstein's paradigmatic example of games: There is no doubt that one can list material properties of games that constitute resemblance among the differing extensions, i.e. members, of the family "game". A possible candidate might be, for instance, that a game requires the participation of players. However, such properties do not relate to a common essence that all extensions of the family "games" possess. Such an essence simply does not exist. Also, the properties are neither necessary nor sufficient criteria that are part of an exhaustive checklist to determine what a game is. Rather, the listed properties constitute exemplary properties of the family of games. The same holds true for material properties of pethood and companionship.

In what way does the practice-sensitive distinction 2.0 between pets and companion animals enrich the discourse compared to the traditional distinction 1.0? To answer this question, I reconstruct the methodological differences of the moral individualistic and the practice-sensitive approach in detail. Variants of distinction 1.0 seek to distinguish pets and companion animals at the level of intrinsic properties. This is the method of moral individualism. As such, distinction 1.0 is a definitional view that pertains to Tractatarian thinking: It is essentialist in determining essential properties to specify the common essence of pets and companion animals. Also, it makes use of analytic definitions to explain the pet and the companion animal. These definitions list essential properties that are classified as necessary and/or sufficient criteria for the status of pet and companion animal. With regard to essential properties, a binary logic is immanent in distinction 1.0 that translates to the dichotomy "either and or": The respective properties are either given or they are not given. In practice, distinction 1.0 is applied in two steps. First, it is attempted to base the distinction on intrinsic properties that refer to

capacities of pets and companion animals. A common example is, for instance, sentience. Closer inspection reveals that pets and companion animals possess the same intrinsic capacities and, hence, do not differ from this point of view. Considering the diverging ways humans treat animal fellows, we still have the feeling that there is a significant difference between pets and companion animals. That is why moral individualists, in the second step, construe relevant relational properties as intrinsic properties of the pet and the companion animal herself. However, the methodology of distinction 1.0 is not suited to elaborate a plausible distinction as the difference between pets and companion animals concerns extrinsic properties.

By contrast, distinction 2.0 locates the difference between pets and companion animals at the level of extrinsic, i.e. relational, properties. This is the method of the practice-sensitive approach. Nevertheless, its method is not moral individualistic in replacing intrinsic, i.e. capacity-based, properties simply by extrinsic, i.e. relational, ones. Distinction 2.0 employs a different methodology for being a prototype view that pertains to the thinking of the “Philosophical Investigations”: It is anti-essentialist and, thus, desists from using analytic definitions that explain what a pet or a companion animal is with the aid of necessary and/or sufficient criteria. Also, distinction 2.0 refrains from the claim to exhaustiveness that is typical of distinction 1.0. Instead, distinction 2.0 draws on the Wittgensteinian notion of family resemblance and considers pethood and companionship resembling social practices. In detail, distinction 2.0 explains what a pet and a companion animal is by means of exemplary properties of the corresponding practices of pethood and companionship. As the practice-sensitive approach constitutes another version of feature theory, it resembles moral individualism methodologically in focusing on properties. From this point of view, it is true that the practice-sensitive approach further elaborates moral individualistic thinking in the respect of focusing on properties to distinguish pets and companion animals. Hence, I refer to the distinction that is drawn by my practice-approach as version “2.0”. Notwithstanding this resemblance, what concerns the properties involved, the practice-approach has a different inherent logic than the simple “either-or” principle of distinction 1.0. Instead, distinction 2.0 offers the more fine-grained choice between a “more or less”: The relevant properties are not either given or not given but are rather present to different degrees.

To take up the initial question: The practice-sensitive approach has the advantage of drawing attention to the fact that pets and companion animals constitute two distinct categories in spite of their close resemblance. Actually, the distinction between pets

and companion animals is at risk of getting masked by their similarity: Both categories are characterized by the same material properties and, thus, also have the same facets. What distinguishes pets and companion animals according to the practice-oriented approach is solely the *emphasis* of certain material facets. The methodology of moral individualism is not suited to detect such fine-grained differences. As a result, the distinction between pets and companion animals frequently remains unnoticed in the discourse and both categories tend to be confused. Yet, pets and companion animals differ, at times considerably.

There are humans who perceive, regard and, consequently, treat their animal fellows as pets. A paradigmatic example for a pet is, for instance, a watchdog who is kept in a kennel outside the house. In this case, the human-animal relation is shaped by the dog's status as property and her function as a living alarm system. Although the human owner might still feel attached to the dog, their relationship lacks the depth that is typical of companionship. Other humans perceive, regard and, consequently, treat their animal fellows as companion animals. The paradigmatic case of a companion animal refers to an emotional bond between a human and an animal who is not owned by the human. Usually, the respective animal is the legal property of someone else. A typical example of such a companion animal is the neighbor's cat. However, as companionship is constituted by the emotional depth of a relationship, the animal can also be a wild animal. A prominent example is the close relationship wildlife conservationist Anna Merz had with the hand-raised black rhino Samia. Merz reports:

> Between us there existed a love, a trust, a reaching out for understanding unlike anything I had known in a relationship before. […] I never tried to discipline or hold her; she lived as a wild rhino. Yet of her own free will, she kept alive with me the bonds of love, trust, and friendship until her death. (2008, 554)

After being released into the wild, Samia visited her human friend Merz on a daily basis and even protected her from other rhinos. On account of their deep emotional bond, Samia was a companion animal in Merz's eyes: "For ten years, Samia and I were companions […]." (Merz 2008, 554) In such cases, deep affection and a high level of reciprocity dominate the human-animal relation which render it a sincere friend- resp. companionship. Nevertheless, the human might still paternalistically interfere with the animal's life, for instance in taking medical decisions, and, thus, exercise domination over the companion animal. However, the crucial point is that the complex of human control does not *define* human relations with companion animals.

The paradigmatic case of the companion animal points to a decisive dimension that concerns the distinction between the categories of pet and companion animal. Although both categories are mutually exclusive from the human perspective, they are complementary from the animal's point of view. A human can only perceive an animal either as a pet or as a companion animal at the same time. An animal, on the other hand, can be both, a pet and a companion animal, at the same time. For instance, it is possible that an animal is considered a pet by her legal owner while she also has an emotional bond with another person who regards her as a companion animal. The crux of the distinction between the category of pet and the category of companion animal is the following: What matters with respect to being a pet or companion animal is the stance the human part of a human-animal relation has towards the animal. If a human perceives an animal as a pet, the facet of the animal's property status, domination over her life and her usefulness in terms of functionality is entrenched in the human's interaction with the animal. By contrast, if a human perceives an animal as a companion animal, the facet of affection, reciprocity and companion-/friendship is entrenched in the human's interaction with the animal. Consequently, these facets shape the stance the human has towards the animal and the way the human treats the animal. In the next section, I prove this thesis that lies at the core of my practice-sensitive distinction between pets and companion animals by empirical findings.

3.2. Substantiating the distinction 2.0: empirical findings

Hitherto, I have argued that pethood and companionship correlate with two distinct stances of humans. Pethood and the pet are associated with a stance that is shaped by the complex of human control, i.e. the animal's property status, human domination over the animal and the animal's usefulness in terms of functionality. Companionship and the companion animal, on the other hand, are linked with a stance that is shaped by the emotional bond, i.e. affection, reciprocity and companionship/friendship. In what follows, this argument is substantiated with three different empirical findings. First, I introduce Blouin's (2013) distinction between dominionistic, humanistic and protectionistic attitudes. Second, I depict the four types of human-animal fellow relationships presented by Fox (1979; 1981). Finally, I integrate Carlisle-Frank and Frank's (2006) differentiation between owners, guardians and owner-guardians. Although all findings are located in their own context, they can be employed to support my practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals.

3.2.1. Blouin: the dominionistic, humanistic and protectionistic stance

In a study, the sociologist David Blouin (2013) observed at least three different stances, or "orientations" as he calls them, in dog owners. Though being deduced from dog owners' experiences, the general nature of these orientations renders it unlikely that they solely apply to human-dog relations. For this reason, I interpret them as general stances humans can have towards animal fellows. According to Blouin, the differing stances are connoted with "different understandings of the meanings and status of pets [i.e. animal fellows, E.T.] and animals more generally" (2013, 281). In practice, each stance correlates with a specific type of human-animal fellow relationship and finds expression in the treatment of animal fellows. Actually, Blouin's theoretical framework fits nicely with the methodological keystones of my practice-approach. Blouin (2013, 289) regards the three stances as general tendencies that can overlap. Also, taking a stance does not prevent animal owners from displaying inconsistent behavior. Consequently, "there are no discrete criteria for labeling individuals one type of owner, but not another" (Blouin 2013, 289). The crux concerning the shared background of both approaches is that my theoretical distinction provides an explanation for Blouin's diverging empirical findings. Thus, Blouin's findings support my practice-sensitive distinction between pets and companion animals.

In detail, Blouin distinguishes a dominionistic, a humanistic and a protectionistic stance. The **dominionistic stance** is essentially "hierarchical" (Blouin 2013, 285). At its core lies approval of the anthropological difference: Animals are considered "less important than humans" (Blouin 2013, 285) and are, consequently, granted "lower status" (Blouin 2013, 285) than humans. Also, animals are perceived "as 'objects' rather than 'subjects'" (Blouin 2013, 285). In my opinion, the best way of capturing this stance is twisting the central point of the contrasting humanistic stance as follows: According to the dominionistic stance, an animal fellow is regarded as "just an animal" (Blouin 2013, 282). The human-animal divide immanent in this stance may also be expressed by the animal's exclusion from the human living space by keeping her outside. Blouin interprets this as a "physical separation [that] provides a symbolic social distance" (2013, 286). Although taking responsible care for the animal is considered an important value, the dominionistic stance is associated with "the lowest level of regard and attachment" (Blouin 2013, 285). Still, the human-animal bond varies from case to case: Some owners are more attached to their animal, others are less attached. What is also

typical of the dominionistic stance is perceiving the animal “in utilitarian terms” (Blouin 2013, 285) as a being who fulfills a specific function for human use. Here, the protective function or the function of being “a source of relaxation” (Blouin 2013, 286) are cited as examples. Blouin summarizes the basic attitude of humans who take the dominionistic stance towards animal fellows as follows: “For the dominionistic group, dog [sic!, E.T.] are lesser, although still valuable, family members that serve some purpose.” (2013, 286) With reference to my practice-sensitive distinction, I argue that the dominionistic stance is the stance taken by those humans who perceive their animal as a pet. The most striking interface between my characterization of pethood and the corresponding dominionistic stance is the emphasis of the animal’s usefulness. Also, considering the animal an object in the wake of approving the anthropological difference clearly refers to the property of the animal’s property status. Therefore, Blouin’s findings substantiate my argument that the human-pet relation is shaped by the animal’s usefulness and her legal status as property.

The **humanistic stance** is distinguished “by an intense emotional attachment to” (Blouin 2013, 282) one’s individual animal fellow. At its heart lies an elevation of the animal’s status: The *humanistic* element refers to the fact that the animal fellow is considered “’not just an animal’” (Blouin 2013, 282) but is rather attributed “the status of humans” (Blouin 2013, 284). According to Blouin, the elevation of animal fellows’ status can be attributed to “their contributions to human [i.e. the owner’s, E.T.] welfare” (2013, 287). Humans who take the humanistic stance regard their animals as “unique and extremely valuable persons” (Blouin 2013, 282) and frequently perceive them “as either their children or close friends” (Blouin 2013, 282). Consequently, the relationship with such animals is “often as important, or sometimes more important than their human relationships” (Blouin 2013, 282), including matrimonial and family relations. Due to the animal’s elevated status, humans with the humanistic stance have the highest risk of all three groups to anthropomorphize their animals (Blouin 2013, 284). Although it looks as if the humanistic type of human-animal fellow relation is based on equality, it is the human interests that actually determine the relationship. Blouin holds: “The humanistic relationship with pets is defined primarily by what the owner wants and needs, that is, what they get out of the relationship, rather than a one-sided assessment of what the dog [animal fellow, E.T.] wants or needs.” (2013, 283) Essentially, animal fellows are valued for satisfying emotional human needs like, for instance, getting “unconditional love and support” (Blouin 2013, 283). In extreme cases, the close

human-animal bond can even create an “emotional dependence” (Blouin 2013, 284) on the animal fellow. At this point, it could be argued with good reason that the humanistic stance resembles the dominionistic one in focusing on animal fellows’ usefulness: While the dominionistic stance highlights animals’ *practical* function, the humanistic stance stresses animals’ *emotional* function. Notwithstanding, Blouin explicitly contrasts both stances for “those with humanistic views strongly disapprove of ‘using’ their dogs [animal fellows, E.T.]” (2013, 283). After all, in the context of the property of usefulness, I have already identified the emotional function of animal fellows as their primary function. Thus, the emotional function constitutes neither a practical function nor a form of use. Blouin (2013, 283) also remarks that animal fellows are typically not mistreated in humanistic relations despite the predominance of human interests. Humanistically oriented humans care attentively for their animals and “spend considerable time, money, and effort ensuring that the dogs [animal fellows, E.T.] are healthy, happy, and comfortable” (Blouin 2013, 283). On the contrary, it appears as if the humanistic care is at risk of going too far: Blouin reports that these humans are “most likely to ‘spoil’ their dogs [animal fellows, E.T.], lavishing them with toys, costumes, fancy collars, and food the animals love” (2013, 283). What concerns end-of-life decisions, these people tend to be unwilling to let their animal fellow go and are, thus, “most likely to try to extend their animal’s life” (Blouin 2013, 284). I argue that the humanistic stance is taken by humans who perceive their animal as a companion animal. What qualifies the humanistic stance as the stance corresponding to companionship is, evidently, the close human-animal bond. Even though the human needs may come first, the human-animal relation is a reciprocal and affectionate one. Also, the humanistic stance meets the property of companion-/friendship as humanistically oriented humans frequently regard their animal as their friend. Others even consider the animal their child. Especially, my distinction is proven by one of Blouin’s humanistically motivated interviewees who states: “I do feel like a dog should be treated like a member of the family, not just as a dog or as a pet.” (Blouin 2013, 283) The interviewee has taken a humanistic stance and, hence, perceives her animal as a companion animal. By contrasting her own humanistic attitudes with a perception that regards animal fellows “just” as pets, she substantiates the practice-oriented distinction I have drawn between pets and companion animals.

The **protectionistic stance** is associated with animal welfare activism and protectionism (Blouin 2013, 288). I suggest to summarize it by the equation “protectionism =

humanism – anthropomorphism". It is typical of humans taking a protectionistic stance to "respect and value animals for their similarities to, *and* differences from, humans" (Blouin 2013, 287). Essentially important is that not only the own animal fellow but animals as such are appreciated this way. The central point of the protectionistic stance is that animals' status is elevated on the basis of their inherent value:

> In the eyes of the protectionistic orientation 'all' animals have an elevated status and deserve consideration equal to, or at least similar to, that provided to humans.[…] The protectionistic orientation's high regard for animals is not determined by any personal relationship, but a belief in the universal or near universal value of animals. (Blouin 2013, 287)

According to the humanistic stance, the status of individual animals is elevated to human status on the basis of personal relations. These animals satisfy basic emotional human needs and are, consequently, in danger of being anthropomorphized by humans. Ultimately, the humanistic human-animal relationship is dominated by the needs of humans. By contrast, the protectionistic stance attributes own, inherent value to animals that resembles the value humans have. For this reason, the status of all animals is elevated so that it is *akin* to the status of humans. Animals are perceived "as subjects, but not as people" (Blouin 2013, 287). At the beginning, I expressed this pointedly by the equation "protectionism = humanism – anthropomorphism". Correspondingly, humans taking a protectionistic stance tend to perceive themselves "as guardians or stewards, rather than parents" (Blouin 2013, 288) of their animals. Also, these humans frequently attribute "significant autonomy" (Blouin 2013, 288) to their animals. That is why protectionistic human-animal relations are guided by humans' "perceptions of their animals' needs and desires, rather than their own" (Blouin 2013, 288). So, the human-animal relationship is determined by the animals' interests. However, the exact treatment of animal fellows varies depending on how humans interpret their animals' needs (Blouin 2013, 288). Protectionistic humans tend to "provide high quality care" (Blouin 2013, 288), obtain their animal fellows "from shelters or as abused or neglected animals they happen upon" (Blouin 2013, 288) and "are also likely to be concerned with animal welfare and protection issues, such as pet overpopulation" (Blouin 2013, 288). In spite of the common respect for animals, the protectionistic stance does not presuppose a close emotional bond with animals, not even one's own (Blouin 2013, 287). Though attachment varies, protectionists still typically "tend to be emotionally attached to and bonded to their animals" (Blouin 2013, 287). Further, they consider their animal fellows "important and valuable family members, who should be given consideration

equal to humans" (Blouin 2013, 287). I argue that the protectionstic stance is also a stance that is taken by humans who perceive their animal as a companion animal: First, protectionists highly respect animals for themselves on account of the animals' value and not for fulfilling a specific purpose as it is the case in pets. Clearly, the dimension of respect and value relates to a kind of affection that is common to companionship but expressed in a different way than the one that is typical of the humanistic stance. Another important junction point between the protectionistic stance and companionship is protectionism's preferential treatment of animals' interests. The claim to meet animals at eye level by elevating their status and entitle them to equal consideration attaches to companionship's property of reciprocity. Also, the emotional bond with the animal and her appreciation as a family member refer, at least, to the beginning of a friendship that is characteristic of companionship. Therefore, I argue that the humanistic stance and the protectionistic stance both correspond to the social practice of companionship.

In sum, the differing stances Blouin (2013) has identified correspond to different social practices of interacting with animal fellows. In practice, humans' attitudes towards animals may be fed by more than one stance at the same time and may also undergo changes (Blouin 2013, 289). However, Blouin solely indicates what I interpret as the central point of his findings. In my opinion, the crux of the differing stances is the following: Together, the stances open up a spectrum of attitudes that humans can take towards animal fellows. Each stance constitutes a specific sub-spectrum of attitudes within the whole spectrum. Although Blouin does not use the term "spectrum", he mentions the related notion of a "continuum" (2013, 291) in discussing the variety of human attitudes. My argument is supported by Shir-Vertesh (2012). Shir-Vertesh's research reveals that humans might perceive one and the same animal as a child at one point in their lives and as a "'not-child'" (2012, 428) at a different point. As animals' status undergoes a change from human to less than human, Shir-Vertesh assumes that animals are solely granted "'flexible personhood'" (2012). In view of the altered perception of animals, Shir-Vertesh argues that the differing attitudes humans take towards animal fellows are located along a continuum:

> Given that the pet category [i.e. the notion of animal fellow, E.T.] is indistinct and changeable in this cultural setting, it can be viewed along a 'humanness'– 'animality' continuum, flexibly positioned at different parts of the gamut as changes occur in the family and in the lives of its members. (2012, 428)

In fact, research indicates that humans' altered perceptions of and attitudes towards animal fellows may be linked with a change in humans' personal circumstances (e.g. Albert and Bulcroft 1988; Blouin 2008 and 2013, 289; Shir-Vertesh 2012; Turner 2001 and 2005). In conclusion, the stances and attitudes humans take towards animal fellows constitute a continuum. In what follows, I present a characterization of the tendencies that are typically associated with the continuum of attitudes humans take towards animal fellows. My line of thought is summarized in Figure 9.

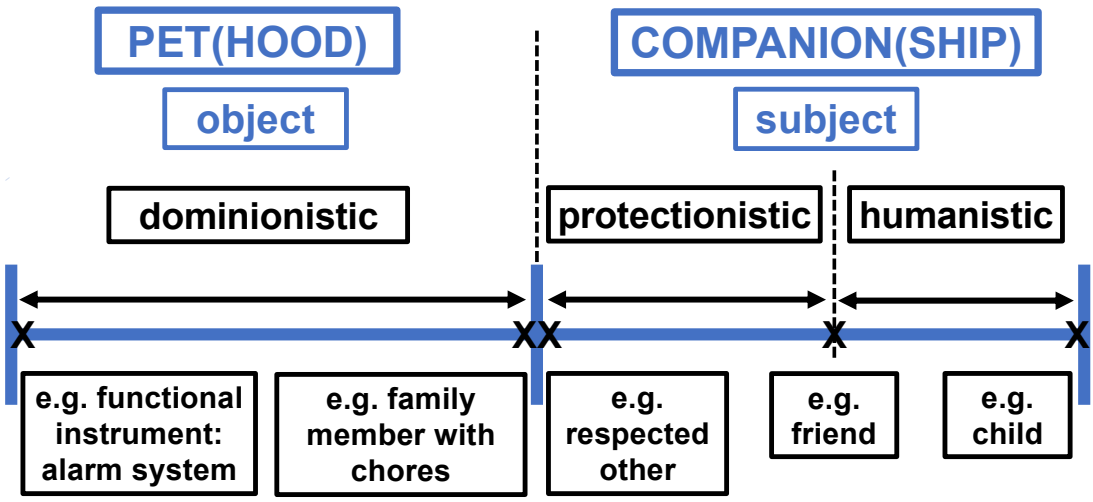

Figure 9: A graphic representation of the tendencies that are typically connoted with the continuum of attitudes humans take towards animal fellows. Still, attitudes can conflict and might also be fed by more than one stance at the same time.

With reference to my practice-sensitive distinction, I argue that human attitudes refer either to the animal fellow as a pet or as a companion animal. The crux of locating human attitudes along a continuum is that a paradigmatic case of a pet and a companion animal simply does not exist. As treatment is dependent upon human attitudes, the ways individual pets and companion animals are treated differ. For instance, to be a companion animal, an animal need not necessarily be perceived as a child. Also, an animal need not be perceived as a functional instrument like, for instance, an alarm system to be a pet. Rather, both perceptions constitute extreme positions that are placed at opposing ends of the continuum of human attitudes towards animal fellows. First, I explain human attitudes towards pets: Humans who regard their animal fellows as pets usually consider them objects. Perceiving an animal fellow as a pet tends to be linked with taking a dominionistic stance. A wide range of attitudes corresponds to this stance. They range from perceiving the animal as a functional instrument like an alarm system on one end of the scale to an appreciated family member who has chores like, for instance, guarding the owner's property. It is obvious that the ways a pet is treated as a functional instrument and as an appreciated family member with chores

differ significantly. By contrast, humans who regard their animal fellows as companion animals typically consider them subjects. Perceiving an animal fellow as a companion animal tends to be linked with taking a protectionistic and/or a humanistic stance. Also, a wide range of attitudes corresponds to the stances that are associated with companionship. They range from perceiving the animal as a respected other (protectionistic), to a friend (protectionistic, humanistic) to the extreme of a surrogate child (humanistic) at the other end of the scale. Evidently, the ways a companion animal is treated as a respected other, a friend and a surrogate child differ enormously. Despite these general tendencies, in practice humans' attitudes towards animal fellows can conflict and be fed by more than one stance at the same time.

The discovery that human attitudes towards animal fellows constitute a continuum explains why analytic definitions of pets and companion animals entirely miss the point. Depending on the wide diversity of human attitudes, a wide range of human-animal fellow relations exists that are each structured and guided by distinct social practices. There is no standard in terms of a common essence that an animal is required to meet in order to qualify as a pet or a companion animal. Take, for instance, the heterogenous group of companion animals: The status of companion animal ranges from a being who deserves respect to that of a friend to the extreme of being considered a child. The use of necessary and/or sufficient criteria is simply not suited to capture the diversity of human-animal relations that can be attributed to human attitudes.

3.2.2. Fox: object-orientation, utilization, need-dependence and actualization

My practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals can further be substantiated by a model of the veterinarian and ethologist Michael W. Fox (1981). The model is not based on concrete empirical data but rather depicts general tendencies of humans' relations with animal fellows. In detail, Fox distinguishes four types of human-animal fellow relationships. I point out that each type corresponds to – and thereby supports – my distinction between pets and companion animals.

The first type is the **object-oriented relationship**. If a human-animal relationship is object-oriented, humans attribute to animal fellows the status of "inanimate objects" (Fox 1981, 31). While being considered a toy by children, adults typically regard the animal as an ornament who is related to "for purely ornamental purposes" (Fox 1981, 30). With reference to my practice-sensitive distinction between pets and companion

animals, I reason that the object-oriented relationship attaches to pethood. Being addressed simply as an object who is not even acknowledged as an animate being refers to the animal's legal status as property. Concurringly, Dotson and Hyatt interpret object-orientation as a type of relationship that conceives of the animal fellow "as possession" (2008, 458). As has already been demonstrated, property status is one of pethood's core properties. Also, the way animal fellows are perceived and treated in object-oriented relationships indicates their usefulness for human purposes which is another central property of pethood.

The second type is the **exploitative or utilitarian relationship**. Here, humans attribute to animals the status of instruments who are made use of "for the exclusive benefit of people" (Fox 1981, 31). Animal fellows are related to "for any utilitarian function" (Fox 1981, 31) which means that the animals fulfill a practical function for humans. To give a few examples, Fox (1981, 31) mentions the use of animals for guard, assistance or breeding. With regard to the practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals, to my mind there is no doubt that the utilitarian relationship attaches to pethood. Evidently, the property of fulfilling a practical function corresponds with the property of usefulness that is characteristic of pethood.

The third type is the **need-dependency relationship**. In this context, humans also attribute in a different way the status of instruments to animals for being considered "a source of satisfaction for various needs and dependencies" (Fox 1981, 31). In contrast to the practical function that is associated with the utilitarian relationship, in need-dependency relations animal fellows fulfill an emotional function. These functions include, for instance, being "a companion; 'confidant'; sibling partner in many games; an unconditionally affectionate and accepting emotional support" (Fox 1981, 32). Another function refers to humans' "need to indulge some living creature, in essence as a child substitute" (Fox 1981, 32). The connection of the need-dependency relationship with the animal's emotional function is similarly stressed by other commentators. For example, DeMello holds that "the animal satisfies the human's needs for companionship" (2012, 157). Also, Dotson and Hyatt interpret the animal fellow's role in need-dependency relations as that of "companion or child surrogate" (2008, 458). What concerns my practice-sensitive distinction between pets and companion animals, I am of the opinion that the need-dependency relationship attaches to companionship. It is true that the emotional function constitutes a form of using the animal fellow for human

purposes and, thus, relates to pethood's property of usefulness. However, the emotional function differs from the animal's practical functions as the emotional function constitutes the animal's primary function. Therefore, the use of the animal for emotional purposes is contrary to a practical function and, hence, does not meet the criterion of usefulness. Rather, the emotional bond in need-dependency relationships refers to the properties of affection and companionship/friendship that are typical of companionship.

The final type is the **actualizing relationship**. Fox considers it a "mature" (1981, 33) relation between humans and animal fellows. In actualizing relationships, humans attribute to animal fellows the status of "a respected 'significant other'" (Fox 1981, 33) and treat them accordingly. In contrast to the other types of relations, humans respect the animal's inherent value for the animal's sake and not for any practical or emotional function the animal fulfills. Hence, actualizing relationships presuppose a change in the way humans perceive animal fellows. The altered perception of the animal is "one that is self-actualizing, less egocentric, and more transpersonal" (Fox 1981, 33). As I see it, the central point of actualization is that the animal fellow is acknowledged and respected as an individual with morally significant needs and interests. In view of the practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals, I argue that the actualizing relationship attaches to companionship. The dimension of relating to the animal fellow as a respected and significant other proves to be a version of reciprocity which is one of the distinctive properties of companionship. DeMello[36] endorses an interpretation of actualization that centers around the notion of reciprocity: She depicts it as a type of relation "in which the person's relationship with the animal is fully equal and based on mutual respect" (2012, 157). Moreover, the importance of the animal fellow's individuality connects to the property of personality that is also commonly associated with companionship.

Analogous to the overlapping attitudes observed by Blouin (2013), Fox holds that the individual types of relation frequently occur to differing degrees and in combination[37]: "The relationships between owner and pet [animal fellow, E.T.] cannot be defined

[36] In her portrayal of Fox's model, DeMello (2012, 157) quotes an article from 1979. By contrast, I refer to a version of the model that Fox published in 1981. Closer inspection reveals that in 1981 Fox has solely slightly altered the model he has presented in 1979. What differs is the fourth type of relation: In 1979, Fox refers to this type as "transpersonal relationship" (1979, 30) while in 1981 he introduces it as "actualizing relationship" (1981, 33). The content of both versions is widely identical. The crux of the matter is that DeMello cites Fox's article of 1979 but mentions as fourth type of relationship "the actualizing relationship" (DeMello 2012, 157). So, it seems that DeMello is actually also referring to the later version of Fox's model from 1981.

[37] It remains unclear whether this also applies to actualizing relations as Fox ascribes special importance to this type of relationship.

simply since they may contain varying degrees of one or more of the previously mentioned types of relationships" (1981, 31). According to Fox, a paradigmatic example of overlapping types of relations is, for instance, a "policeman who loves his working dog as a companion" (1981, 31): In this case, the human-animal fellow relationship is composed of object-orientation, need-dependence and utilization.

It appears as if a normative element is inherent in Fox's model for there are signs that the four types of human-animal fellow relationship are structured hierarchically. For instance, Fox characterizes the need-dependency relationship as a type of relation that constitutes "[t]he next level of interpersonal intimacy" (1981, 31). Also, Fox determines the actualizing relationship as the "final dimension to the social values and uses of pets" (1981, 33). In contrast to the other relations, this type constitutes "a mature, actualizing relationship between pet [animal fellow, E.T.] and owner" (Fox 1981, 33). These comments indicate that the four types open up a continuum of human-animal relationships. Ranked lowest are relations where the animal fellow is treated as a thing (object-orientation). These are followed by relations where the animal fellow is treated as an instrument with some practical function (utilization) and relations where she is treated as an instrument for emotional use (need-dependence). Ranked highest are relations where the animal fellow is treated as a respected other whose inherent value is respected for her own sake (actualization). Although companionship might seem preferable to pethood in certain respects, I do not integrate this normative dimension of Fox's model into my practice-sensitive distinction. The aim of my thesis is a descriptive one: I solely seek to reconstruct how a distinction between pets and companion animals can be drawn that is based on the notion of social practices. Therefore, I specify the practices of pethood and companionship, assuming that they are equally justified. Notwithstanding this difference, Fox's model of human-animal fellow relationships confirms what I have identified as the material core of pethood and companionship.

3.2.3. Carlisle-Frank and Frank: guardian, owner and owner-guardian

Finally, I demonstrate that the categorization of humans who keep animals substantiates my practice-sensitive distinction between pets and companion animals. In this context, my main source is the pioneering work of behavioral and social scientist Pamela Carlisle-Frank and ecological economist Joshua M. Frank (2006). The background of their study is the Guardian Initiative that was already mentioned in the first chapter. This initiative aims to instill in common parlance the use of the expression "guardian"

instead of the traditional term “owner” to refer to animal fellows’ “caretakers” (Carlisle-Frank and Frank 2006, 225). Adjusting the terminology is required, so the initiative argues, as the term “owner” adheres to the obsolete view that animals are “objects, possessions, or disposable property” (Carlisle-Frank and Frank 2006, 225). Instead, the initiative speaks up for considering animals “sentient beings with needs and interests of their own” (Carlisle-Frank and Frank 2006, 225) which they associate with the expression “guardian”. The Guardian Initiative expects the change in terminology to improve the way humans perceive and, accordingly, treat animal fellows (Carlisle-Frank and Frank 2006, 225). In a questionnaire study, Carlisle-Frank and Frank (2006) put this hypothesis to test.

Carlisle-Frank and Frank (2006, 229) discovered that there are three distinct categories of human caretakers: They either regard themselves as animal owners, animal guardians or owner-guardians. Also, the authors observed that each of these categories corresponds with a particular set of attitudes towards animal fellows. As the Guardian Initiative forms the backbone of the study, the central point concerns the question of whether the caretakers attribute the status of property to their animal fellows. Carlisle-Frank and Frank (2006, 236f.) report that the majority of self-declared owners (80,9%) considers their animal property. In owner-guardians, this view is solely shared by approximately one-half (52,3%). By contrast, only the minority (10,4%) of self-declared animal guardians regard their animal as property. Interestingly, despite this discrepancy, animal fellows’ status as family members is not contested in any of these groups: In the study of Carlisle-Frank and Frank (2006, 236), 86,8% of owners, 100% of owner-guardians and 99,0% of guardians declared their animal fellows family members. As its name suggests, the category of owner-guardian constitutes a hybrid between owner and guardian. Nevertheless, Carlisle-Frank and Frank locate owner-guardians closer to guardians as they “were, by and large, far more similar to guardians than they were to owners in their attitudes toward, beliefs about, and treatment of, companion animals [animal fellows, E.T.]” (2006, 238).

As owners’ interactions with animal fellows tend to emphasize the facet of property status, I argue that the category of owner refers to the social practice of pethood. The findings of Carlisle-Frank and Frank prove that owners, accordingly, tend to have attitudes and display behavior that corresponds to the stance Blouin (2013) has labelled “dominionistic”. For instance, Carlisle-Frank and Frank (2006, 231) report that in owners the main source of acquiring animal fellows is purchase (48,5%). Clearly, the fact

that the animal is bought like an article of merchandise reflects owners' perception of their animals as legal property. By contrast, in guardians the main sources of acquiring animal fellows are adoption (56,5%) and taking in a stray (38,9%). This trend is confirmed by the hybrid category of owner-guardians, who partly hold the property view: Although owner-guardians frequently purchase animals (50,0%), they also have a strong tendency to adopt animals (59,1%) or take them in as strays (43,2%). Moreover, according to Carlisle-Frank and Frank (2006, 232), the group of owners is the one least likely to allow their animal fellows to live indoor (76,5%). In comparison, almost all guardians (97,4%) and owner-guardians (97,7%) keep their animals inside. Therefore, I conclude that the category of owner refers to human relations with pets.

On the other hand, Carlisle-Frank and Frank (2006, 238) report that 93% of owner-guardians and 97% of guardians explicitly refuse to consider animal fellows property. Instead, 97% of guardians and 91% of owner-guardians perceive animals as "sentient beings with needs/interests of their own" (Carlisle-Frank and Frank 2006, 238). By contrast, solely 65% of owners agreed with this statement. So, guardians and owner-guardians are more likely than owners to acknowledge their animal fellow as a subject and individual other. For this reason, I argue that the categories of guardian and owner-guardian both refer to the social practice of companionship. However, classifying human caretakers with Blouin's (2013) theoretical frame like I did with owners is problematic. Several findings of Carlisle-Frank and Frank (2006, 232) appear to indicate that the category of guardian relates to the humanistic stance: Of all three groups, guardians are most likely to display behavior that is typical of humanism, for instance adding photos of the animal to the family photo album (93,6%), celebrating her birthday (61,7%) with gifts for birthday and holidays (80,8%), including her name to greeting cards (69,4%) and showing her love (65,8%). Also, the findings of Carlisle-Frank and Frank (2006, 232) seem to link the category of owner-guardian with the protectionistic stance: Owner-guardians are most likely to display protectionistic behavior like, for instance, spaying/neutering the animal (95,5%), providing her with identification technology (79,5%) and are least likely to lose their animal (11,4%). Owner-guardians are also the group most likely to take in stray animals: 43,2% of them keep former strays whereas solely 22,1% of owners and 38,9% of guardians have taken in strays (Carlisle-Frank and Frank 2006, 231). Notwithstanding that, especially the latter point testifies to the inherent difficulty of ascribing the humanistic stance to guardians and the protectionistic stance to owner-guardians: Frequently, guardians and owner-guardians

are solely distinguished by a few percentage points and, hence, do not differ significantly. Also, Carlisle-Frank and Frank's (2006, 238) findings do not reveal that owner-guardians champion animal welfare concerns significantly stronger as it would be typical of protectionism. For instance, 98% of owner-guardians and 97% of guardians believe that the dependency and helplessness of animals obligates humans to help them. Other details suggest that animal welfare is slightly stronger advocated by guardians than owner-guardians. For instance, 97% of guardians and 95% of owner-guardians subscribed to the opinion that animal fellows "should not live long-term in cages" (Carlisle-Frank and Frank 2006, 238). Also, 96% of guardians and 95% of owner-guardians supported the view that animal fellows have to be spayed/neutered to end overpopulation and suffering. Moreover, the link between the category of owner-guardian and the protectionistic stance is weakened by the case of property status. As has been demonstrated, approximately half of owner-guardians perceive animals as property. Considering the animal property is associated with treating her as an object which, in turn, makes it likely that human interests dominate the human-animal interactions. As protectionists prefer animals' interests to their own, the category of owner-guardian rather appears to be linked with a humanistic stance on part of the human. At this point, it could be objected that in spite of a protectionistic orientation, some owner-guardians regard animals as property as they refuse to grant them human status. However, it appears as if the categories of guardian and owner-guardian simply do not entirely match Blouin's (2013) stances. Possibly, this incompatibility can be attributed to the fact that Blouin does not distinguish different kinds of caretakers. He solely reports that protectionists "are more likely to think of themselves as guardians or stewards, rather than parents" (Blouin 2013, 288) like humanists do. Nevertheless, Carlisle-Frank and Frank's (2006) findings substantiate the argument that the categories of guardian and owner-guardian refer to human interactions with companion animals.

So, it can be concluded that Carlisle-Frank and Frank's (2006) categorization of human caretakers does not entirely correspond to the orientations distinguished by Blouin (2013). Notwithstanding these inconsistencies, Carlisle-Frank and Frank's (2006) findings confirm what I have identified as the material core of pethood and companionship: Owners' interactions with animal fellows tend to be determined by the animal's legal status as property, one of the core properties of pethood. Guardians' and owner-guardians' relations with animal fellows, on the other hand, tend to be shaped by the animal's individuality. Individuality, however, lays the foundation for an emotional bond with the

animal which is the central core of companionship.

Based on my interpretation of Carlisle-Frank and Frank's (2006) research, what the Guardian Initiative actually aspires to achieve is a boycott of pethood. It is implied that pethood – which corresponds to the term "owner" – expresses a morally problematic stance towards animals that considers them objects and mere instruments. By encouraging a shift in terminology from "owner" to "guardian", the initiative in fact tries to induce humans to perceive and treat animal fellows as companion animals. In my thesis, I take a descriptive stance and solely specify pethood and companionship without examining the moral legitimacy of each practice. In view of the fact that the Guardian Initiative takes a normative stance without providing such an analysis either, I consider its rejection and substitution of pethood problematic. The central point of my practice-sensitive distinction is that "pet" and "companion animal" may on no account be equated, exchanged for another or used synonymously as they refer to distinct social practices that correspond to differing human attitudes. In the next step, I synthesize my findings and indicate a possible explanation for the phenomenon that humans' perception of an animal as a pet or a companion animal can change over time.

3.3. Synthesis: a practice-distinction between pets and companion animals

The premise of my thesis is that humans socially construct pets and companion animals on the basis of relationships that are regulated by social practices. By taking part in the social practice of pethood or companionship, an animal fellow is constituted as a pet or a companion animal. Pethood and companionship are not only social practices themselves but also assemblages of numerous sub-practices. What concerns their status as social practices, I have presented pethood and companionship as structurally and materially resembling: Both are integrative practices that share the same structure and, to a large extent, the same material properties. The difference between them is – to employ a Darwinian notion – not a matter of kind but a matter of degree: What distinguishes pethood and companionship is the *emphasis* of certain material facets.

In the course of developing my Wittgensteinian practice-sensitive distinction, I performed a detailed analysis of the practices that pertain to pethood and companionship. The central point of the practice-approach is that there is no clear-cut distinction between pets and companion animals as suggested by moral individualism's essentialist method of using checklists. Rather, the practice-oriented method to distinguish pets

and companion animals is best summarized by my slogan “drawing a distinction without drawing a line”. Any kind of practice-sensitive distinction is solely suited to depict tendencies of pethood and companionship and, thereby, pets and companion animals. Unlike moral individualism, the practice-approach is anti-essentialist and, as such, does not seek to specify to the last detail what a pet or a companion animal exactly is. Therefore, the practice-sensitive distinction between pets and companion animals necessarily remains vague. What concerns the material dimension, I have distinguished pethood resp. pets and companionship resp. companion animals as follows. The social practice of **pethood** and, with it, the **pet** emphasizes the facet of human control over the animal: That is the animal’s legal status as property, human domination over the animal as well as the animal’s usefulness in terms of her practical functionality. By contrast, **companionship** and, by that, the **companion animal** stresses the facet of an emotional bond with the animal: That is affection, reciprocity as well as companion-/friendship. I also referred to this facet as animal fellows’ “emotional function” that is contrary to the property of usefulness for being animal fellows’ primary function. It is beyond the limits of my thesis to draw any moral implications that could follow from this conceptual distinction.

The crux of my practice-sensitive distinction is that pethood and companionship correlate with differing stances on part of the human towards the animal fellow. That is why I presented in the second section of this chapter empirical findings that substantiate my distinction. First, I introduced Blouin’s (2013) differentiation between dominionistic, humanistic and protectionistic orientations. According to my interpretation, Blouin’s findings suggest that human attitudes towards animal fellows constitute and are located along a continuum. This continuum has been presented graphically in Figure 9. The fact that human attitudes towards animal fellows open up a continuum is also the reason why analytical definitions of pets and companion animals are doomed to fail: Due to the wide diversity of human-animal fellow relations, there is simply no standard in terms of a common essence that is met by all and only pets or companion animals. Moreover, I have demonstrated with reference to Blouin’s (2013) findings that the social practice of pethood corresponds to taking a dominionistic stance. Companionship, on the other hand, corresponds to taking a humanistic and/or protectionistic stance towards animal fellows. Still, this classification solely depicts tendencies: Blouin (2013, 289) has pointed out that humans’ attitudes towards animal fellows might overlap and

are not always consistent. Also, Blouin (2013, 289) reports that humans' attitudes towards animals are not fixed but subject to change throughout their lifetime. This observation is confirmed by a large body of empirical research that includes, for instance, Shir-Vertesh's (2012) findings. Second, I portrayed Fox's (1981) classification of human-animal fellow relationships. I have argued that pethood tends to translate into human-animal fellow relations that are object-oriented and utilitarian in nature. While it is characteristic of object-orientation to treat the animal like an inanimate object such as a toy or an ornament, utilization regards the animal as an instrument that fulfills some practical function. By contrast, I have demonstrated that companionship tends to translate into need-dependent as well as actualizing human-animal fellow relations. Need-dependence grants the animal the role of an instrument that fulfills an emotional function whereas actualization addresses the animal as a respected other individual. Fox's commentary on his typification resembles Blouin's (2013) methodological approach: Fox (1981, 31) holds that in practice human-animal fellow relations can and, in fact, are often composed of more than one of these elements to differing degrees. Third, I have shown with reference to the findings of Carlisle-Frank and Frank (2006) that humans who engage in the social practice of pethood tend to regard themselves as animal owners. Humans who perform the social practice of companionship, however, tend to consider themselves either animal guardians or owner-guardians. In summary, my analysis has painted a picture of pethood and companionship as complex social practices that correlate with differing human attitudes towards animal fellows.

Moreover, the empirical findings have brought to light the central point that human attitudes towards animal fellows are open to change. A human's perception of a specific animal either as a pet or as a companion animal is not fixed. On the contrary: The perception of a specific animal by one and the same human might change at different points in the human's life such that a former pet becomes a companion animal and a former companion animal becomes a pet. Closely related is the fact that humans perceive different individuals of the same species differently. Irvine and Cilia illustrate this phenomenon, which they attribute to humans' "cultural ambivalence toward animals" (2017, 2), with the example of the differing roles of dogs: "The dog […] can be a cherished companion, a farm worker, a hunter, a roaming nuisance, a racing or fighting 'machine,' a tool for research, or food […]." (2017, 2) In this case, one and the same human perceives individuals who are members of the same species differently. From my point of view, the changing perceptions of animals indicate that animal fellows have

liminal status. Without going into detail, what does the notion of liminality stand for? From a historical point of view, Wischermann and Howell explain liminality as follows:

> Liminality derives from the Latin *limen* or limit and describes the experience of being at or on the threshold. It refers at once to the *passage* from one state to another and the moment of *transition*, being in-between, neither one thing nor another, or both one thing and the other, or perhaps best of all caught between the no-longer and the not-yet. (2019, 2)

So, liminality describes a state of transition that is located between different statuses. Wischermann and Howell (2019) give a short overview of liminality's history and development. Initially, liminality has been an anthropological key concept for analyzing rites of passage in the human sphere of life. Currently, liminality has become widely used in the social sciences (Wischermann and Howell 2019, 3). According to Wischermann and Howell, attempts have been made recently to apply the notion of liminality to animals. In their opinion, relevant literature includes, for instance, Donaldson and Kymlicka's (2011) political work "Zoopolis", Squier's (2004) book "Liminal Lives" as well as their own anthology "Animal History in the Modern City. Exploring Liminality" (Wischermann et al. 2019). Wischermann and Howell also report that there are voices in the discourse who interpret animals as "iconic liminal subjects" (2019, 9).

Wischermann and Howell praise the notion of liminality for its immanent fluidity and power to break deadlocked patterns: "Liminality after all is supposed to question fixed boundaries and categories, putting a premium on the hybrid and the provisional, revelling in the creative potential unleashed by being 'betwixt and between'." (2019, 4) One of the effects of liminality's revolutionary potential is "that established categories of differences between types of being dissolve and blur" (Wischermann and Howell 2019, 7). The authors illustrate this point by demonstrating how the liminal state of "feral" undermines the traditional dichotomy of wilderness and domestication: Although "feral" commonly refers to a being who has "escaped from human control" (Wischermann and Howell 2019, 7), at least some feral animals are neither fully wild nor fully domesticated. Rather, they are both, wild and domesticated at the same time. As the state of feral fluctuates between wilderness and domestication, Wischermann and Howell (2019, 8) associate it with liminality.

Analyzing Donaldson and Kymlicka's (2011) version of liminality, Wischermann and Howell (2019, 8) also relate it with the notion of commensalism. However, as they do not clarify the exact relationship between both concepts, it remains unclear whether

liminality and commensalism can be used synonymously. O'Connor (2013) is, for instance, one of the authors who have contributed to the discourse on commensalism.
In summary, by linking the changing perceptions of animals with liminality, I construe animals as beings whose status is flexible and prone to change. What concerns animal fellows, liminality actually proves to be an integral component of pethood and companionship in form of the property of variable status: As has already been demonstrated, the property of variable status makes clear that the status of pet or companion animal presupposes an ongoing relationship between a human and an animal. Its central point is that the status of pet or companion animal is variable as human-animal relations are not fixed but subject to changes. If a human ceases to interact with her animal fellow, for instance as a result of abandonment, the animal loses her status as a pet or a companion animal. This kind of flexibility that is inherent in pethood and companionship is the core of the notion of liminality. Wischermann and Howell explicitly link the flexibility that is typical of the status of animal fellows with liminality:

> We should also think of the host of formal and informal rites governing the liminal civil status of 'companion animals', as they are moved for instance from the condition of surplus animality in shelters and refuges (as 'pets in waiting'), to the emotional and legal property of human beings in their 'forever home'. (2019, 6)

So much about animal fellows' liminal status. But, how, then, should we deal with the phenomenon of liminality that is expressed by humans' changing perceptions of animal fellows? After all: In spite of pethood's and companionship's fluidity and vagueness, at a certain point we can and do reach the decision that a specific animal is a pet or a companion animal. From that moment on, we use to perceive and treat the animal either as a pet or as a companion animal until that pattern of perception is changed by inner or external events. In the remaining part of this chapter, I point a Wittgensteinian way to explain this phenomenon. My explanation essentially draws on Reshef Agam-Segal's (2014) concept of aspect entrenchment. Aspect entrenchment is a crucial concept of the wider debate on Wittgenstein's notion of aspect perception. However, it is beyond the limits of my thesis to elaborate the suggested explanation of humans' changing perception of animal fellows in detail as the discourse on aspect perception is itself complex (e.g. Ahmed 2017; Baz 2010; Glock 1996, 36ff.; Glock 2016). To give just one example, it is, for instance, controversial whether aspect perception is distinguished from perception as such (Agam-Segal 2014, 50).
Agam-Segal (2014, 45) considers his discussion of aspect entrenchment an extension

and elaboration of the Wittgensteinian notion of aspect perception. His approach is based on the premise that aspect-perception constitutes a method to reach conceptual judgements (Agam-Segal 2014, 41f.). According to Agam-Segal, aspect-perception is meant to be used in cases of conceptual unclarity where we are not committed to any conceptualization as our "conceptual routine is broken" (2014, 66).[38] To illustrate this point, Agam-Segal (2014, 59) gives the example of whether a specific case of euthanizing a human qualifies as murder or an act of mercy. It is precisely such cases of conceptual unclarity that are circumscribed by Agam-Segal's slogan "when language gives out" (2014) which is also the title of his publication. Even though Agam-Segal holds that these cases are characterized by "a conceptual void" (2014, 43), they reveal nothing like a "nonconceptual […] or […] 'naked'" (2014, 46) "bare reality" (2014, 47). Rather, the notion of a conceptual void solely indicates the lack of a conceptually committing routine: "In aspect-perception we encounter a reality that is expecting to be conceptualized, or inviting conceptual reflection, but it is not yet a reality that assumes routine conceptual commitment on our part." (Agam-Segal 2014, 47)

So, how, then, does Agam-Segal explain the phenomenon of aspect-perception? To begin with, Agam-Segal (2014, 50f.) clearly contrasts aspect-perception with ordinary perception. Also, he locates the reflection process that accompanies the dawning or experience of an aspect at the level of "palpable experience" (Agam-Segal 2014, 54). As such, aspect-perception can either be a sensual or "a cognitive experience" (Agam-Segal 2014, 57). However, the crucial point with regard to sorting out conceptual unclarity is that in aspect-perception one experiences the meaning of a concept (Agam-Segal 2014, 55). In aspect-perception, so Agam-Segal argues, "a possible meaningful life of an object is revealed" (2014, 57). This view is best explained with reference to the way how aspect-perception is initiated. According to Agam-Segal (2014, 45), one possibility to induce aspect-perception in the case of conceptual unclarity is to evoke different images. This argument is spelled out with the aforementioned example of euthanasia: Imagine we need to determine whether a specific case of euthanasia qualifies as murder or an act of mercy. In trying to conceptualize this case, we can employ manifold images that resemble the case at hand. For instance, we can refer to the image of veterinary practice and think about possible parallels with animal fellow euthanasia. Including relevant literature, Agam-Segal illustrates this line of thought as follows: "[I]t may help to think: 'If I were to keep a pet animal in the same condition I

[38] Note that Agam-Segal (2014, 60) regards this just as one type of conceptual uncertainty.

am in, I would be prosecuted'[…] or 'I am the kind of creature that makes sense of its pains, and can respond to the moral claims of its suffering.'[…]" (2014, 59) Another image compares the case at hand with the mercy killing of livestock: "They say for instance: 'This is merciful. It is the same thing we do to a dying cow.'" (Agam-Segal 2014, 45) Immediately, Agam-Segal also draws attention to the fact that this parallel can be contested: "Or alternatively: 'This is a human, not a cow. It is not something that you would consider eating. When humans die, you bury them, and when they are dying, you tend to them.'" (2014, 45) In summary, the crux of calling up different images that resemble a conceptually unclear case is that these images "make us experience aspects" (Agam-Segal 2014, 60). By the comparison with relevant images, certain aspects of the case at hand are expected to lighten up in our perception that enable us to conceptualize the case appropriately. By triggering the perception of aspects, the method of evoking images permits us to experience experimentally how the conceptualization of an unclear case with distinct concepts would feel like[39]:

> Asking ourselves such questions allows us to reflect in experience, to feel what it would be like to bring the matter into our world in this way or that […] and even if our asking ourselves does not itself force us to a particular decision, it can help us in choosing the appropriate concept. (Agam-Segal 2014, 60)

The purpose of images like animal fellow euthanasia is provoking how it would feel like to conceptualize the case of euthanasia at hand, for instance, as a merciful act. So, following Agam-Segal, aspect-perception actually proves to be a method to check whether it feels appropriate to conceptualize an unclear case with certain concepts. Consequently, Agam-Segal considers aspect-perception a method to relate concepts "with a particular body of norms" (2014, 45).

The actual key point is linked with what Agam-Segal describes as "the preparatory role of aspect-seeing" (2014, 57)[40]. This role refers to aspect-perception's characteristic to indicate (new) routines of conceptualizing unclear cases that are justified by the mere perception of an aspect: "Seeing a new aspect may therefore be preparatory: that is, we may use the fact that we can see a certain aspect as justification for establishing a

[39] Without being able to go into detail, the experimental character of testing different conceptualizations reminds me of the objectives of John Dewey's (2008a [1908], 292f.) method of the dramatic rehearsal. According to Grimm (2010, 200f.), the dramatic rehearsal specifies the notion of deliberation that Dewey defines as "an imaginative rehearsal of various courses of conduct" (2008a [1908], 293). Grimm (2010, 197ff.) offers an extensive interpretation of both concepts.

[40] It is not entirely clear to me whether aspect-perception is in every case preparatory: At one point, it appears as if Agam-Segal (2014, 58) suggests a distinction between a preparatory and a non-preparatory type of aspect-perception.

routine of conceptualizing something in that way, and of using it under that conceptualization." (Agam-Segal 2014, 58) So, the occurrence of possible conceptual routines by the perception of aspects lays the foundation for reaching a judgement on the appropriate conceptualization of an unclear case. What concerns the explanation of humans' changing perceptions of animal fellows, the crux of the matter is the following. On a basic level, the core of aspect-perception is the dimension of "seeing as", especially the moment of "see[ing] something *anew*" (Agam-Segal 2014, 48). In conceptually unclear cases, the dawning of an aspect in our perception suggests the conceptualization by a certain conceptual routine. Agam-Segal describes this experience as a "sudden realization" (2014, 49) which "strikes us, overwhelms us" (2014, 50). In Agam-Segal's (2014) view, there are the two types of aspect-perception: First, conceptually entrenching aspect-perception and, second, conceptually not entrenching aspect-perception. I interpret Agam-Segal's distinction as follows. If the perception of an aspect entrenches us conceptually, we become committed to the use of the conceptual routine that is linked with the very same aspect:

> Seeing an aspect, in contrast, is seeing something out of the ordinary […]. Indeed, in some cases of moral realization, it may be difficult to separate the realization from the moral commitment—especially in those cases in which the realization strikes us, overwhelms us, and entrenches us conceptually. In such cases, we do not remain uncommitted, as we do with puzzle pictures. (Agam-Segal 2014, 50)

On the other hand, if the perception of an aspect is conceptually not entrenching, we do not become committed to the use of the conceptual routine that is suggested by the aspect. According to Agam-Segal, reaching judgements on the appropriate conceptualization of unclear cases does not presuppose conceptual entrenchment by the perception of an aspect:

> Even when the experience does not entrench us conceptually it may still allow us to settle on a concept and bridge the conceptual gap created by lack of clear norms or by the existence of competing or conflicting norms. In such cases, the aspect-experience may still help us to conceptualize because it gives us an experiential way to reflect upon the norms we need or want to have: to have a taste, as it were, of what it would be like to conceptualize the matter in this or that way, but without yet assuming an already established commitment on our part. (2014, 59)

So far, I have shown that humans reach at some point in their relations with animal fellows the judgement to conceptualize an animal either as a pet or a companion animal. With reference to Agam-Segal (2014), I argue that this conceptual judgement can be attributed to a conceptual entrenchment that followed the perception of a certain

aspect. It is the nature of human-animal fellow relations that the material facets distinctive of pethood and companionship lighten up. If a human perceives an animal fellow under the aspect of **pethood**, the perception of the joint interaction centers on the properties that characterize the facet of human control over the animal: These are the animal's legal status as property, human domination over the animal as well as the animal's usefulness in terms of her practical functionality. By contrast, if a human perceives an animal fellow under the aspect of **companionship**, the perception of the joint interaction is dominated by the properties that constitute the facet of an emotional bond with the animal: These include affection, reciprocity and companion-/friendship. Thus, the aspect of pethood or companionship that has lightened up in the human's perception of her interactions with the animal becomes entrenched. The animal fellow becomes entrenched either under the aspect of a pet or a companion animal and is, hereafter, perceived and treated as a pet or a companion animal. What, then, is it like to be conceptually entrenched in the use of a certain conceptual routine?

According to Agam-Segal, the crux of conceptual entrenchment is that it is impossible to perceive anything but the conceptual routine we have become committed to: "Once we've seen a certain aspect in such cases, we are not free any longer to move between aspects." (2014, 61) In detail, Agam-Segal depicts conceptual entrenchment as the loss of the ability to perceive other aspects than the entrenched one. What has been lost is not only the knowledge how to perceive other aspects but rather the knowledge that there are other aspects that could be perceived:

> [W]hat happens is *not* that for us there is now an activity that we cannot engage in—seeing something as before the aspect-experience. The 'forgetting' is much deeper: for we now do not see an activity any longer. We only have a vague impression of a memory that once there used to be an activity that we could engage in; but it is as if we now cannot quite recall what it was. We are entrenched. (Agam-Segal 2014, 62)

In summary, entrenchment in a conceptual routine due to the perception of an aspect eliminates any alternative conceptualization of a certain case. That is why Agam-Segal holds that "aspect-experiences can have the power to silence […] a whole way of conceptualizing some matter" (2014, 63).

Agam-Segal (2014, 61) also makes the point that humans frequently respond differently to the perception of one and the same aspect. This thesis is illustrated by means of human perceptions of meat following a tour of a slaughterhouse: Due to exposure to the carcasses in meat processing, Agam-Segal believes that some participants become conceptually entrenched in perceiving meat under the aspect "of corpse remains

on their plate" (2014, 61). Others, however, remain conceptually entrenched in perceiving meat under the aspect of food. And still others, so Agam-Segal holds, do not become conceptually entrenched by the perception of carcasses at all and, thus, remain able to perceive differing aspects. Even though human perceptions of the same aspect might differ, Agam-Segal emphasizes that there are methods to reconnect with the experience of other individuals. For instance, there is the possibility "that we can try to make others see aspects, and try ourselves to see them when so urged by others" (Agam-Segal 2014, 62). By sharing our experiences with others, we actually have a chance to guarantee "that we might share a world" (Agam-Segal 2014, 62). For the purpose of my argument, these are the central points of Agam-Segal's (2014) theory on aspect entrenchment.

In what follows, I draw on Agam-Segal's (2014) theory to explain the phenomenon of changing perceptions of animal fellows. I argue that a change in humans' perceptions of animal fellows indicates that the experience of aspect-perception has taken place. Somehow, the conceptual routine that has formerly been entrenched has broken down and leaves behind what Agam-Segal calls "a conceptual void" (2014, 43). There is empirical research that associates such a change in human perceptions of animal fellows with a change of external circumstances (e.g. Albert and Bulcroft 1988; Blouin 2008 and 2013, 289; Shir-Vertesh 2012; Turner 2001 and 2005). From that moment on, it simply does not make sense to conceptualize the animal any longer using the accustomed conceptual routine. Faced with this conceptual unclarity, suddenly another aspect lightens up in the human's perception of her interactions with the animal fellow. Thereby, a different routine to conceptualize the animal is suggested. The lightening up is followed by the entrenchment of the new aspect: The animal fellow becomes entrenched in the conceptual routine that is implied by the new aspect und is, hereafter, perceived and treated accordingly. Thus, the former perception of the animal with the corresponding conceptual routine has become replaced by a new one. To illustrate this point, I present as an example the changed perceptions of the couple Noam and Tamar towards their dog Albert that is reported by Shir-Vertesh (2012, 425). In Noam and Tamar's case, the change of their perception followed the birth of their first child. While the couple explicitly considered Albert "their first baby" (Shir-Vertesh 2012, 425) during pregnancy, the dog became steadily downgraded in status. Initially being perceived as a child, the dog became an "adopted kid" (Shir-Vertesh 2012, 425) and a practice tool for caring for the human baby. Later on, the dog's status as a child

was replaced by the status of a pet in the couple's perception. Shir-Vertesh quotes Tamar as follows: "Previously he [the dog, E.T.] was like a child, now he is . . . a pet." (2012, 425) As Shir-Vertesh acknowledges, finally the dog even lost his status as an animate being and became perceived by the couple as a mere object: "Tamar semi-jokingly asked me if I want a dog, pointing at Albert. 'All he's good for is cleaning up scraps from the floor,' she told me several times. 'He is basically a vacuum cleaner.'" (2012, 425) I interpret Noam and Tamar's case as follows: Initially, their perception of Albert was entrenched under the aspect of a companion animal. However, as the external circumstances in their life changed, the couple's routine to conceptualize their animal fellow broke down. What followed was an experience of aspect-perception: Within the perception of Albert under the aspect of a companion animal, Noam and Tamar switched from the aspect of their own child to the aspects of an adopted (i.e. alien) child and of a child for practice. What is striking is the resulting break between the couple's perception of Albert as a companion animal and as a pet: At one point, Tamar explicitly recognized that she had come to perceive her dog under the aspect of a pet. Within the perception as a pet, Albert even became ranked down to be perceived under the aspect of an inanimate object. In conclusion, Noam and Tamar's perception of their dog had changed from being entrenched under the aspect of a companion animal to be entrenched under the aspect of a pet.

Conclusion

A specific type of essentialist argumentation pattern is common to applied ethics. In the first step, it is ascertained what ontological or moral status an entity possesses to deduce, second, from this status the obligations and duties moral agents owe her. The variant of this essentialist method that dominates animal ethics is called moral individualism. Moral individualists determine moral status by the use of analytic definitions that specify common essences: They refer to intrinsic properties that are considered essential properties as well as necessary and/or sufficient criteria to confer moral status to an entity in question. The same argumentation pattern is applied to the distinction of pets and companion animals. Moral individualists define what a pet or a companion animal is by elaborating checklists of intrinsic properties that constitute necessary and/or sufficient criteria for the status of pet or companion animal. Common properties include, for instance, that the animal is given a name, shares a human's sphere of live and depends on the human. However, I have demonstrated that it is not so much intrinsic but rather extrinsic properties and social practices that determine what a pet and a companion animal is. Also, I have highlighted that pets and companion animals are socially constructed by relations with humans that are guided by social practices. As the moral individualistic method neglects these aspects, it is not suited to distinguish pets and companion animals appropriately. So, the distinction between pets and companion animals calls for an alternative methodological approach that takes the importance of extrinsic properties and social practices into account.

In this thesis, I have developed such a method with reference to Schatzki's Wittgensteinian understanding of social practices and Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance. Building on these methodological tools, I depicted human interactions with pets and companion animals as the distinct integrative practices of pethood and companionship. I have argued that pethood and companionship constitute structurally and materially resembling social practices. As such, they share numerous material properties. What distinguishes both practices is the *emphasis* of certain material aspects. Pethood and, with it, the pet emphasize the facet of human control over the animal: That includes the animal's legal status as property, human domination over the animal and the animal's usefulness in terms of her practical functionality. Companionship and, with it, the companion animal, on the other hand, emphasize the facet of an emotional bond with the animal: That includes affection, reciprocity and companion-/friendship.

With respect to methodology, what distinguishes the practice-sensitive approach I

have developed from the criticized moral individualistic model? To specify the differences between both approaches, I have classified them by means of Armstrong et al. (1983). With reference to Armstrong et al., the moral individualistic and the practice-oriented approach both qualify as feature theories due to focusing on properties. On the basis of the classification that is provided by Armstrong et al., moral individualism qualifies as a definitional view of feature theory. The reason for this is that moral individualism draws up checklists of necessary and/or sufficient criteria to define concepts and statuses. By contrast, the practice-oriented approach constitutes what Armstrong et al. describe as a prototype view of feature theory. This can be attributed to the fact that the social practices of pethood and companionship are family resemblance concepts: As such, pethood and companionship exhibit similar properties that are individually neither necessary nor sufficient. In sum, there are solely subtle differences between the methodology of the moral individualistic and the practice-oriented approach. As both methodological approaches pertain to feature theories, both focus on properties: While moral individualism centers on intrinsic properties of the pet and the companion animal, the practice-oriented approach draws on exemplary extrinsic properties of pethood and companionship. However, the central difference is that the moral individualistic approach is an essentialist method whereas the practice-sensitive approach abandons essentialism. Thus, the properties determined by the practice-oriented approach constitute neither essential properties nor necessary and/or sufficient criteria for pethood and companionship. Although the material core of human control in pethood and an emotional bond in companionship is necessary, they do not constitute necessary and/or sufficient criteria for pethood and companionship.

How, then, does the practice-sensitive method to distinguish pets and companion animals enrich the discourse in animal ethics? In my opinion, the practice-oriented approach has the crucial advantage of bringing pethood/the pet and companionship/the companion animal out clearly as two distinct categories. After all, pethood and companionship are solely distinguished by the *emphasis* of certain material aspects. In view of the close resemblance that concerns the structure and material dimension of both practices, the distinction between pets and companion animals is at risk of getting masked by the similarity of both categories in the discourse. Take, for instance, moral individualism: The methodology of moral individualism is simply not suited to detect fine-grained differences like the differing emphasis of certain material aspects. The

practice-oriented method, on the other hand, is designed to take such subtle differences into account. That is how the practice-sensitive methodological approach to distinguish pets and companion animals enriches the discourse in animal ethics.

The key point of my practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals is that pethood and companionship correlate with different stances of humans towards animal fellows. In pethood, I have argued, the stance a human takes towards an animal is shaped by the material facet of human control over the animal. Consequently, the way the pet is treated is shaped by the animal's property status, human domination and the pet's usefulness in terms of her practical functionality. By contrast, in companionship the stance a human takes towards an animal is shaped by the material facet of an emotional bond with the animal. Consequently, the way the companion animal is treated is shaped by affection, reciprocity and companion-/friendship. I have substantiated this argument with several empirical findings. With reference to Blouin (2013), I have demonstrated that pethood tends to correlate with taking a dominionistic stance towards the animal. Companionship, on the other hand, tends to be linked with a protectionistic and/or a humanistic stance towards the animal. On the basis of Blouin's (2013) and Shir-Vertesh's (2012) findings, I have argued that human attitudes towards animal fellows constitute a continuum. This continuum is presented graphically in Figure 9, which I consider the most important figure of my thesis. The crux of this continuum is that a wide range of differing human-animal fellow relations exists. Consequently, there does not exist some standard in terms of a common essence that all pets or companion animals have to meet. In view of the lack of such a standard, I have argued that the moral individualistic attempt to define the pet and the companion animal by analytic definitions is doomed to fail.

Another essential point concerns the changing perceptions of animal fellows. Building on Blouin (2013) and Shir-Vertesh (2012), I have pointed out that a human's perception of an animal fellow is not fixed but open to change at different points in her life. Especially when the human's life changes, an animal fellow formerly perceived as a companion animal may become a pet and vice versa. I have attributed the phenomenon of changing perceptions to animal fellows' liminal status. By definition, the flexibility that is peculiar to animal fellows as liminal beings rules out the possession of some fixed status. In the final synthesis, I have suggested to explain humans' (changing) perceptions of animal fellows by means of Agam-Segal's (2014) notion of aspect entrenchment. When a human perceives an animal fellow as a pet or a companion animal, I

have argued, the material aspects associated with pethood or companionship have lightened up in the human's perception of the animal. Thereby, the human has become conceptually entrenched to perceive and treat the animal either under the aspect of a pet or a companion animal. A change in the human's perception of the animal indicates, however, that she has experienced aspect perception: The formerly entrenched routine of conceptualizing and perceiving the animal fellow under the aspect of a pet or a companion animal has broken down. This might be caused, for instance, by a change in the human's life situation. The animal fellow becomes entrenched under a different aspect and is, from now on, perceived and treated accordingly.

I conclude by an outlook for future research. First and foremost, future research has to focus on the development of practice-oriented methods in animal ethics. My thesis has proven the immense potential of applying such methods: As practice-sensitive methods are suited to take fine-grained differences and contexts into account, they overcome several deficiencies of the moral individualistic method. Thus, practice-oriented approaches prove to be a promising alternative to moral individualism that still dominates the discourse in animal ethics. Second, further research should reflect upon possible moral implications of the conceptual distinction between pets and companion animals. In this context, particular attention must be given to implications that concern the way animal fellows are treated. Finally, more research is needed on human attitudes towards and changing perceptions of animal fellows to understand our complex relations with the animals who share our lives.

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Abstract

English

In animal ethics, it is common to tackle normative questions by a specific essentialist methodological approach that is called “moral individualism”. Moral individualism defines what an entity is or what moral status an entity possesses by means of intrinsic properties. These properties are considered necessary and/or sufficient criteria for being such an entity or possessing such a status. The same essentialist method is applied to define what a pet or a companion animal is: Moral individualists identify distinct intrinsic properties of the pet or the companion animal that are each considered necessary and/or sufficient criteria for the status of pet or companion animal. By contrast, my thesis assumes that relations and social practices – and not intrinsic properties – essentially influence what a pet or a companion animal is. I argue that the moral individualistic method does not take the importance of extrinsic properties and social practices sufficiently into account. Therefore, my master’s thesis questions how pets and companion animals can be distinguished in a practice-oriented way.

In my thesis, I develop an alternative practice-sensitive methodological approach to distinguish pets and companion animals that is inspired by the later Wittgenstein. Thereby, I proceed in three steps. The first part of my thesis is dedicated to portraying how moral individualism defines and distinguishes pets and companion animals. Also, I make the deficiencies of this method a subject of discussion. In the second part, I elaborate the methodological resources that are required to distinguish pets and companion animals in a practice-sensitive way: First, I introduce the theoretical approach of practice theory and its central concepts. Second, I present Theodore Schatzki’s account of practice theory to illustrate a Wittgensteinian understanding of social practices. Third, I analyze Wittgenstein’s notion of family resemblance. With reference to these methodological tools, I draw, in the third part, a distinction between pets and companion animals that builds on the notion of social practices. In detail, I characterize human interactions with pets and companion animals as the distinct social practices of pethood and companionship. I argue that pethood and companionship constitute structurally and materially resembling social practices that are distinguished by the emphasis of certain material aspects. Pethood emphasizes the facet of human control over the animal fellow, i.e. the animal’s property status, domination and usefulness. Companionship, on the other hand, emphasizes the facet of an emotional bond with the

animal fellow, i.e. affection, reciprocity and companion- resp. friendship. Finally, I substantiate my practice-oriented distinction between pets and companion animals with empirical findings.

Deutsch

In der Tierethik werden normative Fragen üblicherweise unter Bezugnahme auf einen essentialistischen methodischen Zugang geklärt, der „moralischer Individualismus" genannt wird. Der moralische Individualismus definiert Entitäten sowie deren moralischen Status mithilfe von intrinsischen Eigenschaften. Diese Eigenschaften gelten als notwendige und/oder hinreichende Bedingungen, um eine derartige Entität zu sein oder einen derartigen Status zu besitzen. Dieselbe essentialistische Methode wird angewendet, um zu definieren, was ein *pet*[41] oder *companion animal* ist: Moralische Individualisten identifizieren unterschiedliche intrinsische Eigenschaften des *pet* oder *companion animal*, die jeweils als notwendige und/oder hinreichende Kriterien für den Status als *pet* oder *companion animal* gelten. Im Gegensatz dazu geht meine Arbeit davon aus, dass Beziehungen und soziale Praktiken – und nicht intrinsische Eigenschaften – wesentlich mitbestimmen, was ein *pet* oder *companion animal* ist. Ich argumentiere, dass die moralisch individualistische Methode der Bedeutung extrinsischer Eigenschaften sowie sozialer Praktiken nicht ausreichend Rechnung trägt. Daher hinterfragt meine Masterarbeit, wie *pets* und *companion animals* in einer Weise unterschieden werden können, die sich an sozialen Praktiken orientiert.

In meiner Masterarbeit entwickle ich einen alternativen Praktik-sensitiven methodologischen Zugang zur Unterscheidung von *pets* und *companion animals*, der vom späteren Wittgenstein inspiriert wurde. Dabei gehe ich in drei Schritten vor. Der erste Teil meiner Arbeit beschreibt, wie der moralische Individualismus *pets* und *companion animals* definiert und unterscheidet. Zudem thematisiere ich die Unzulänglichkeiten dieser Methode. Im zweiten Teil erarbeite ich die methodologischen Ressourcen, die erforderlich sind, um *pets* und *companion animals* in einer Praktik-sensitiven Weise zu unterscheiden: Erst führe ich in den theoretischen Zugang der *practice theory*[42] und deren zentraler Begriffe ein. Zweitens präsentiere ich Theodore Schatzkis Zugang zur

[41] Im Deutschen existiert noch keine Übersetzung der Begriffe, die von der vorliegenden Masterarbeit unterschieden werden.

[42] Auch für diesen Begriff existiert keine zweifelsfreie deutsche Entsprechung. Vgl. dazu Kapitel 2.1.3. der vorliegenden Arbeit.

practice theory, um ein Wittgenstein'sches Verständnis sozialer Praktiken zu illustrieren. Drittens analysiere ich Wittgensteins Vorstellung der Familienähnlichkeit. Unter Bezugnahme auf diese methodologischen Werkzeuge nehme ich im dritten Teil eine Unterscheidung zwischen *pets* und *companion animals* vor, die sich auf die Vorstellung sozialer Praktiken stützt. Im Detail charakterisiere ich menschliche Interaktionen mit *pets* und *companion animals* als die verschiedenartigen sozialen Praktiken der *pethood* und *companionship*. Ich argumentiere, dass *pethood* und *companionship* strukturell und material ähnliche soziale Praktiken sind, die sich durch die Ausprägung bestimmter materialer Aspekte unterscheiden. *Pethood* betont die Facette der menschlichen Kontrolle über den tierlichen Gefährten, d.i. den Status des Tieres als Eigentum, menschliche Kontrolle sowie die Nützlichkeit des Tieres. *Companionship* hingegen hebt die Facette des emotionalen Bandes mit dem tierlichen Gefährten hervor, d.i. Zuneigung, Reziprozität sowie Kamerad- bzw. Freundschaft. Abschließend stütze ich meine Praktik-orientierte Unterscheidung zwischen *pets* und *companion animals* mit empirischen Erkenntnissen.