

MEAT YOU

Final Bachelor Project
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INTRODUCTION

Meat is a foodstuff that is ubiquitous today and has been close to us for ages, giving shape to rich rituals and experiential associations. Regardless, it might not be here to stay. At the prospect of the increasing popularity of vegetarian and vegan diets and products, my project regards the concerns and dilemmas of eating meat.

Through an envisioned future where an animal-free diet is the norm, I critically examined our contemporary meat culture. I found a big discrepancy between the way we relate to the product and the production process of meat that I wanted to address through design.

I designed an alternate restaurant experience where guests kill their food, aimed at reconnecting consumers to the source of their food and facing the dissonant emotions this prospect entails in a conscious and thoughtful way.

This has been a project in the Transformative Practices squad at Eindhoven University of Technology in collaboration with Prof. H. Hummels of Maastricht University, who asked me to design for Agapē as well as forpeople design agency, who asked me to inspire their design research process into clean (lab-grown) meat.

DESIGNING FOR AGAPE

Agapē is one of the four words used to describe love in ancient Greece. The Greeks distinguished Storge (empathic, familiar love for those close to us), Philia (appreciative, friendship-love), Eros (romantic or sexual love), and Agapē (Lewis, 1960). Agapē is a broader, unconditional love going out to strangers. It is described as “A commitment to the flourishing of someone or something else that is wanted by the other and expresses itself in concrete actions and realizations” by Hummels and van Dijk (Hummels & van Dijk, 2020). In a talk with prof. Hummels earlier this year, he explained to me and fellow students the core premise of Agapē is hearing the other and being aware of and committed to their well-being. It is being benevolent and caring to people relatively unfamiliar to you. It is often explained as the way God loves his followers, or the way in which we can have a love for society, culture or the natural world.

I was introduced to Agapē before the challenge to design for meat culture was set. I organized a joint brainstorming session in the squad to reflect on the value of Agapē and what it means for business and design. Together with peers, I role-played as different characters to determine what we would invest resources in as ourselves, and two personas: one entrepreneur founding a new business who values capital and productivity and one monk who embodies agapic values described above.

Key takeaways for this exercise were that however stark their contrast, the personas’ actions surprisingly overlapped slightly in some areas: although for different motives, both would invest in spreading of their values and beliefs and bettering the lives of people around them. This sometimes makes it hard to distinguish between agapic actions and selfish ones and makes the differences between them more nuanced than I had initially expected.

Another example of this nuanced way in which the border between business and charity is blurred can be found close to home. In the early 20th century, Philips (and through Philips the city of Eindhoven) was booming under the reign of brothers Gerard and Anton Philips. The brothers tried to cater to the every need of their ever increasing body of employees. Philips built houses (now Philipsdorp and Drents dorp), Philips-schools, a Philips-library, a Philips-theater, a Philips-grocery store (now Etos) and Philips sports club (now PSV). Anton Philips once speched “Through your spirit of cooperation, unity and togetherness, our company has grown. That you may participate with equal enthusiasm in our companies, to bring our companies—your companies—even higher up, for the good of you all, for the good of your families and those of future employees, for the good of our industry, our city and our motherland.” (NTR VPRO, 2013)

Anton’s business was to make and sell lightbulbs and make a profit, but in doing so he sought to benefit society by investing in infrastructure and facilities. This would make his employees inclined to work harder for him and in turn increased productivity and profits again. In this way, Agapē can motivate and drive business or the other way around without it necessarily being clear which is which from observation. The true motivation would have only been known to Prof. Philips himself.

It was interesting to merge designing for Agapē with designing for meat. My main focus became facilitating this relationship and bond with the other (in this case being the animal to be consumed). A lot of research has been conducted in studying and interpreting animal behaviour, both relieving negative experiences (Grandin, 1997; Lamey, 2019) and inducing positive ones (Balcombe, 2009).



Persona 1

starting new business/ investing in his own company/investing in interesting start ups

invest a lot of money into the company. This is maybe the first step: protect, expand, renew. Hire workers and pay them a good loan -> they will work better

invest more money in his own company and maybe even expand his own company. Buying other companies who are similar to his, to make more profit out of his company



Persona 2

invest money to local things and also to show people his lifestyle so they will be inspired as well. Since he/she is interested in the planet invest money in rescuing nature in his neighbourhood

small scale initiatives > locality, social impact. Educational activities.

invest in local opportunities. Help humanity grow by starting in small places. Donate to charity

VALUE OF MEAT



When my project leaders introduced me to the client and their challenge, I was immediately intrigued. We met with creative agency forpeople, who told us about their current challenge; working for Mosa Meat to explore futures for lab-grown meat through design and position it in the market. They asked us to inspire their process.

I think the prospect of lab-grown meat offers a lot of potential. It means the animals we eat could live out their life undisturbed while a tiny sample of their stem cells feeds millions. We might be able to spend less resources (land, water, crops) on raising animals and therefore diminish their impact on climate change. At the same time, there's still some way to go for clean meat until it is as appealing, sustainable and affordable as it might potentially be (Berlis, 2015; Bomgardner, 2018).

I was most intrigued to pinpoint cultural and habitual practices relating to meat in order to find out which ones would easily transfer to being based around meat alternatives, which would change and how, and which we would be happy to get rid of. I produced a video (Baselms, 2020b) to present this topic in which I shared some of my thoughts on meat and asked squad members to share their view on what they value/dislike about meat. All answers can be found in the appendix, I made an overview of the most common values of meat culture in a moodboard. I also moodboarded some of the rich experiential properties meat can have that might need to be recreated in any meat replacements.

There is a perceived value and tradition to meat. It is a principal part of many dishes that have been prepared for a long time and have become part of tradition in a certain group of people, be it a family, nation, religion or culture. Think for example of a Mediterranean cured meat platter, a Christmas roast or cherished family recipe passed down for generations. Others deemed meat important due to health benefits, or it just being an integral part of a natural diet.

There were also a lot of reasons given not to like meat. The macho, masculine nature was one of the aspects deemed undesirable. Health, ethics and the environment were others. Notably, a lot of people I talked to who liked meat also expressed a hint of grief talking about why. In general, I could perceive a certain sense of guilt in many participants. A view that I could relate to myself.



MEATLESS SOCIETY

Next, I envisioned a society where nobody would eat animal products anymore. A world in which a vegan diet would be the norm, and meat would be very difficult to come by. What would the attitudes of this society be towards ours if they learned about our practices? From the responses I had gotten in my research so far, concern was in environmental impact and the scale at which meat was produced. My expectation is that the thing this society would be most amazed by would be the practice of killing for food. If humans were to essentially turn into herbivores, it could be very challenging for them to grasp the concept of slaughtering an animal for food.

This is an angle I think for people might not have considered yet. Their biggest driver for promoting clean meat was that it would have a positive impact on climate, which might be the case but has also been contested (Lynch & Pierrehumbert, 2019; Berlis, 2015). In the end, the biggest change will be the omission of raising and butchering animals for food production, which will have an impact on the climate, but will undoubtedly also have an impact on how we relate to food, animals and our past practices.

I also observed that to a certain degree this was already happening. In current society we already hardly associate killing with cooking, death with dining, live animals with the meat they produce. The process of meat production is neatly tucked away behind the closed doors of slaughterhouses and meat has become a ubiquitous commodity. I think the personal encounters with slaughter I have had due to my father and his family (see chapter “Family History”) are rare and becoming rarer in my generation. However shocking this experience was, I believe it was a valuable one that has changed the way I relate to the meat I eat, and has the potential to do this for other people too. This is why I set myself the goal of designing to reconnect consumers to the source and process of their meat. Like many participants I talked to I wish consuming meat would be a more deliberate, conscious choice perceived as a luxury rather than a commodity. I set out to design stories, tools and interactions that would aid reflection and discussion upon one’s personal beliefs and convictions. This would hopefully teach me and the people involved in my project about different ways to look at meat. In doing so I aimed to keep my own opinions in the background to focus on presenting interactions to fuel thought on one’s own practices rather than mine.



FAMILY HISTORY

In order to research my own views on meat and where they came from, and to get a historical perspective on meat, I talked to my father and his father.

My grandfather comes from a large household living in the countryside on the border of Brabant with Belgium. At the head of the family was his father, who primarily worked as a thatcher in the summer months and a butcher* in the winter. He would go around different farmers in the area and slaughter their animals with them. At these farms a farmer would have six or seven pigs, some chickens and a couple of cows. For months a pig would be fed and fattened until the colder winter months meant it was finally time for them to be turned into bacon.

The pig would be killed, cut in half and cleaned. The internal organs were taken out and the pig was hung onto a ladder and leaned against a wall to chill and die off. Tongue, heart and liver could be prepared right away. The intestine, father would take home for his wife and my grandfather to clean. They would later be used as sausage casings.

A few days later, the rest of the pig could be cut up into smaller pieces (butchered); hams were hung from the mantelpiece, bacon would be brought to a vat in the basement to be salted and sausage was ground. The head was boiled in a large pot to be turned into headcheese.

The family would often be busy for a couple of days before all the meat was done and the house was fully stocked again. Parts of this stock would also disappear quickly as a farmer who had recently slaughtered could be sure to expect a lot of visits from family and neighbors who'd be happy to share some. For my grandfather, this meant meat was usually at the table. Father would bring it home from work. It would be a lot more common than fish for example, which would only be eaten on special occasions like Christmas or Easter.

My father then came from a smaller family. My grandpa ended up working as a municipal worker in Eindhoven, but my dad's uncle did own a slaughterhouse and butchery, where my dad would often work for some pocket change. He would help slaughter and butcher great numbers of pigs, cows and some horse to be sold in the local butcher shop. It was hard work, not for those with weak stomachs, but also rewarding to be able to help in food production. He also grew up eating a lot of meat.

By the time he was my father, he always held some chickens, sheep, goats or geese around the house that, when their time had come, he would slaughter himself.

I helped my dad slaughter a rooster and a couple of geese for my maternal grandfather, who also has the habit of keeping some small farm-animals around the house when I was 14, and did so again recently in the context of this project. Slaughter is a pretty bewildering experience; it's sad and scary but also educative and in a way beautiful. I like meat, and eat it regularly; on bread, as a snack or for dinner. It is ubiquitous in the world I live in, a commodity, but at the same time increasingly under criticism. A lot of my friends are vegetarian, and I too can see there are a lot of problems with the production and consumption of meat. Helping slaughter some birds taught me a lot. The killing was quite emotional and repulsive; seeing the animal spasm and squirt blood as it dies off is not a nice sight. Next, we skinned the birds, which I experienced as a relief and a transformation. The dull, bloodstained feathers made way for clean, familiar muscle fibers. I found cleaning out the organs like an interesting biology lesson, being able to see and feel different organs as they came out of the warm body. Butchering made me appreciate and value meat more and confronted me with the fact that a chicken in my back yard and a chicken on my plate were the same entity. It made me appreciate animals for their role as sustenance and respect meat for having been a live, sentient being in a more lived, experienced way. Before, I was a little disgusted at my grandparents' love for head cheese, liver, tongue, pork rinds and chicken necks, but having seen a whole animal transformed into food made these foods seem a lot less exotic. Now, only seeing sterile, amorphous slabs of filet, burger or nugget was maybe the weirder thing.

* There is a slight nuance that is lost in translation here. My great-grandfather was known in Dutch as a slachter rather than a slager. Slachter means one who slaughters animals (kills and makes primal cuts). Slager means one who butchers (cuts the carcass into smaller, portion-sized cuts) and sells the meat. In English, the word butcher covers both occupations.

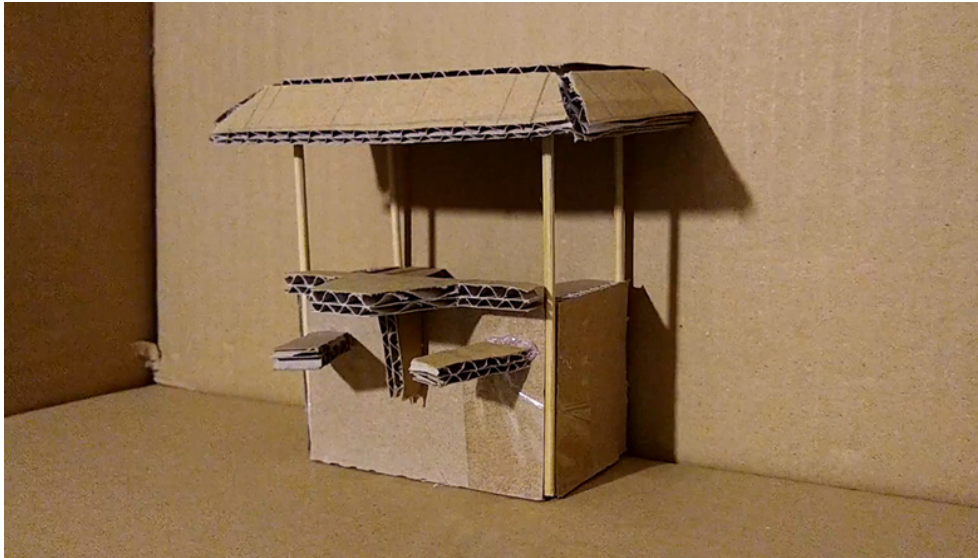
DESIGN ITERATIONS

I made a few iterations trying out different things and learning different aspects of what people like and dislike about slaughter.

1. Slaughter at the table

I first wanted to create an experience of heightened dissonance, quite literally bringing the slaughter into the restaurant and onto the dinner-table.

At this restaurant, killing and preparing the meat would be done at a counter connected to the table, with chairs slightly slanted inwards to increase the intimacy between the guests and the butcher. I chose chicken to be on the menu, because it is a smaller animal of which a sizable part can be eaten in one dinner by two adults. It is also the animal of which most get farmed and eaten, at an almost incomprehensible rate (Consider Veganism, n.d.). The guests would enjoy a small appetizer made of egg before slaughter would commence, then enjoy samplings of organ meat (liver, heart) as they would be removed from the carcass. Finally, they would be served the main course of chicken breast or leg to their choice with a side dish.

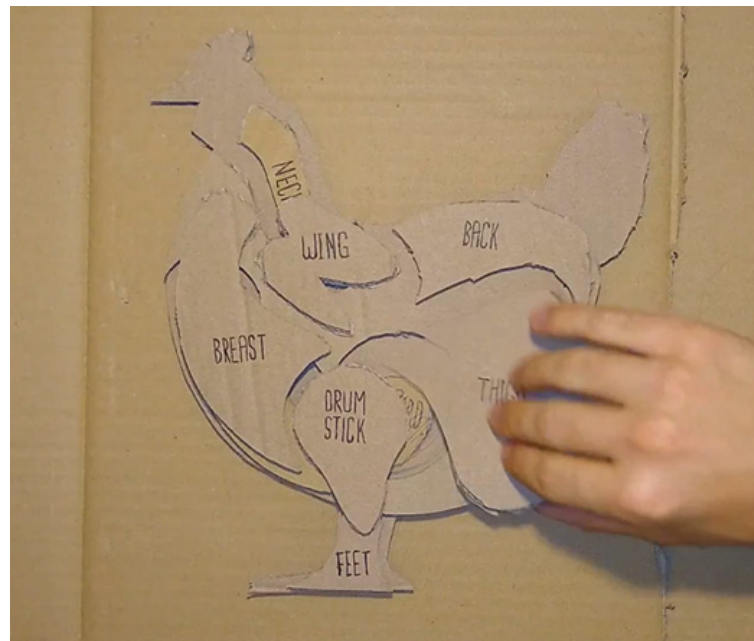


In evaluating this idea, I showed these images to participants in the squad and asked them to watch a video which calmly and clearly displays and explains the process of slaughtering a chicken (paul wheaton, 2011). Most peers and stakeholders expressed doubt at the prospect of displaying slaughter live at the table. Watching killing in a dining context did demonstrate the cognitive dissonance and hypocrisy I discovered through the interviewing and value mapping I had previously done. It did so however in a way that was shocking and revolting. The shock was desired to a certain degree; it was able to serve as a source of discussion and reflection on why slaughter was shocking despite being so common. The repulsion I found not to be constructive to the type of discussion I wanted to have. It made discussion break down out of discomfort and disgust; the notion that this proposed setting was just undesirable.

2. Faux chicken

Subsequently, I prototyped a faux chicken that could be used to demonstrate slaughter without having to kill. Reasoning behind this was that one could experience the practices and actions of killing an animal without the moral objections one might have towards it. I made a body out of a featherlike fabric and constructed articulated feet and head.

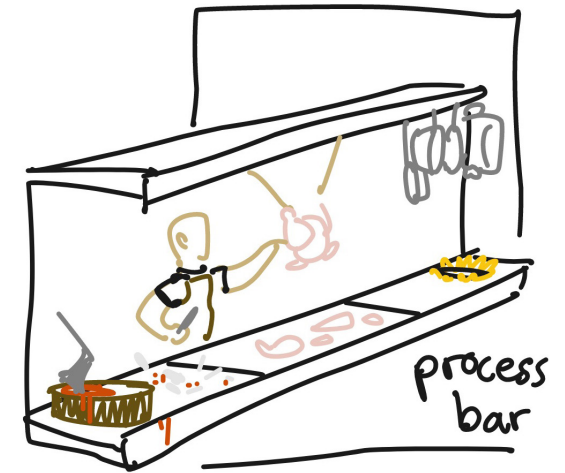
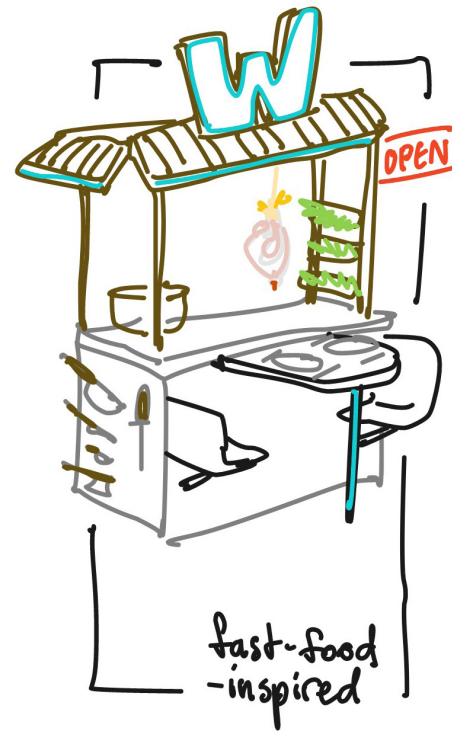
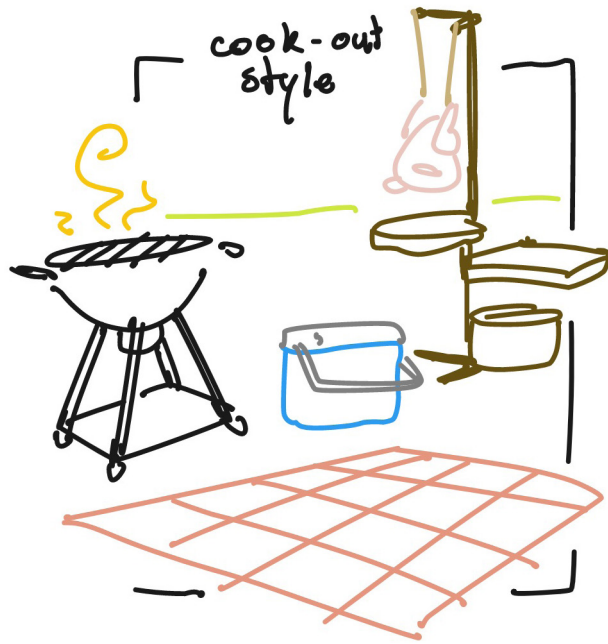
Showing this to people made me realize it was a step in the wrong direction. It sparked even more confusion and discomfort than the previous concept. “Why would you want to slaughter something that doesn’t have meat?”, “What is the point?” were questions I often got while reflections on the nature of slaughter and its role in meat culture failed to materialize.



3. Menu

I tried to take a subtler approach to bridge the gap between meat and animal using this prototype. A menu that shows directly where on the animal a cut of meat comes from. It still brought the animal to the dinner table, but in a more stylized, less shocking way. Still diners would be ‘taking the chicken apart’ and in doing so find less conventional meats such as back, neck, heart or gizzard, but in a way that didn’t include knives, blood and animal suffering.

It was an interesting prop, a lot more acceptable than my previous iterations. It was liked for presenting meat in a more honest, contextual way to the consumer in a way that is dinner-table friendly. I was pleased to see this, it felt like a milestone to have a prototype that was not revolting to the people I tested it on. At the same time I felt like it was lacking. It took some steps towards triggering thought and reflection on the connection we have with the animal and process, but not sufficiently so.



In my opinion the first prototype brought a more interesting angle and taught me more on how we relate to meat than the others. Now my goal was to alter it to make the experience less repulsive and more desirable. I first played with the idea of different types of dining experiences before making a more radical shift towards my final iteration, focussed more on the process of slaughter as an experience rather than it being an add-on to dining.

FINAL CONCEPT

For my final concept I scaled up, making the experience at my restaurant less about the outcome and more about the process. Rather than a chicken being slaughtered at a table, my final iteration focused on slaughtering a pig not for, but together with a larger group of people. I considered the effect intelligence of the animal could have on the decision to eat it (Jarvenpaa, 2019; Piazza & Laughnan, 2016), as well as the scale of the interactions and the amount of people that could share in the experience in choosing a pig over a chicken to be at the center of this experience.

Furthermore, it is a process less like eating in a restaurant and more involved in the production of meat, inspired by European pig slaughter traditions. These traditions are celebrated in many Baltic and Slavic countries to this day under different names (MOLDAVIAN PIG SLAUGHTER, n.d.; Ivana, 2016) and in rural parts of Spain as *matanza del cerdo* (Sánchez & Caballero, n.d.). In these places, pig slaughter is an annual event at which families come together and celebrate the harvesting of pork meat. This used to be a practice in many more countries all over Europe (see also the chapter “Family History”) but is quickly disappearing due to industrialization of the process and increasingly strict regulations. As you will see I also took various cues from other traditions and practices concerning death and funerals.



(Bruegel, 1617)

At Butcherhouse, an envisioned alternative restaurant, guests are invited to help kill and butcher one, two or three pigs (depending on group size) in a way that respects the animal and the craft of slaughter. Guests are welcomed to the Butcherhouse for a two day stay by a small group of hosts, consisting of farmers, butchers and cooks.

On the first day all guests first change into black coveralls. This uniform is the first step towards connecting and unifying guests. The colour black means dirt and blood will not show as much and also symbolizes grief and death.

Next, they enjoy an elaborate vegan meal together with their hosts, during which they get to know each other. This highlights the absence of meat as the norm and makes clear that meat will only be present after slaughter.

After dinner, guests gather at the pig pen and feed any leftovers to the pigs. This can be seen as an offer or token of appreciation towards the animals and also connotes the role primary consumers play in the food chain.

In a moment of silence, the pigs are killed by the guests. More on this in the chapter 'Mediating the kill'.

The pigs are carried to the cleaning room atop a large wooden slab. This is again a joint effort of multiple of the guests involved. It is a strenuous job befitting the gravity of the occasion. It echoes the tradition of pallbearers we have for when humans are buried.

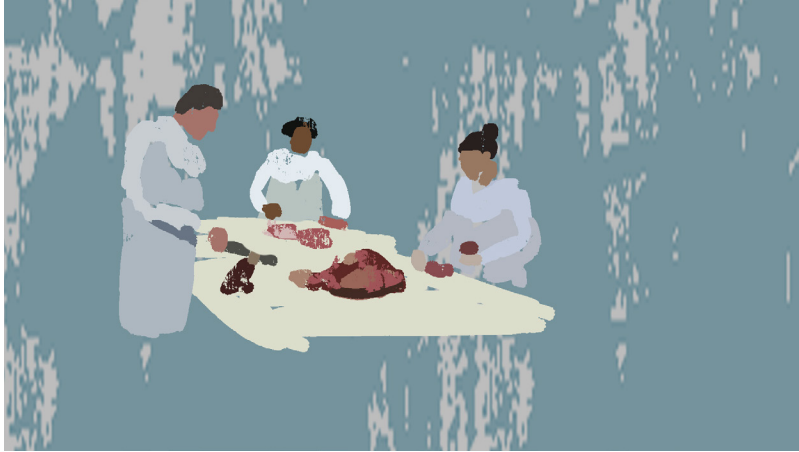
The pigs are bathed in hot water and their hair is scraped off the skin. This is an intimate, personal interaction in which guests will touch the body of the pig, washing and cleaning, possibly forming a meaningful connection with the deceased animal before it makes the transition to being viewed as food.

The pigs are hung from their feet and the bowels are removed (eviscerated), it is left to chill overnight. At this point, with the body totally cleaned off and all hair removed, it is expected that guests will start to identify the pork more so than the pig*.

Guests gather around a campfire to end the day. This offers another opportunity to bond over the new experiences and discuss them. It also acts as a buffer between interacting with the pig and going to sleep**. The fire is here a symbol of transformation as well as a connection to primal, hunter-gatherer sentiments.

* This transition is clearer on animals that are skinned before being prepared thus exposing the muscle tissue familiar as food rather than the skin familiar as live animal. The way a pig is traditionally butchered however means the skin is an integral part to the way important cuts of meats, like hams and bacon, are salted and dried. Also choosing to skin the animal would forgo the intimate interaction guests have by scalding and scraping the pig together.





On day two guests don white coveralls. This contrasts the black they wore the day before, it fits in the tradition of chefs and butchery-workers wearing white and sets a different tone for the day. The body can now be regarded as a foodstuff to be prepared, meaning a lighter spirit is appropriate.

The carcass(es) is/are taken down and brought to the butchery. There, the head is removed, and the carcass is halved and cut into its primal cuts: shoulders, legs, belly and loin. At this point the cuts of meat should slowly become recognizable to guests.

Guests can help with several simpler tasks such as grinding sausage meat, cleaning intestines and making them into sausages, salting bacons, hams and sausages as needed and hanging them to dry or smoke and boiling bone, skin and cartilage for stock. Skilled butchers will oversee this process and execute the more challenging actions such as carving out ribs and other delicate cuts. The process is hands-on and akin to a cooking workshop, very different in tone from the day before.

At the end of the second day everyone holds a barbecue dinner where the finest cuts of meat are shared. This serves as a conclusion to the experience and a celebration of the work completed.

Guests are sent home with the rest of their share of meat packed for use in the months after. This is a box that will contain approx. 10 to 15 kilos of meat. This box might contain some of the meat prepared on the preceding days, but also hold pieces from animals butchered by other groups since many meat products take time to mature and cure, enhancing their flavour. Cooking meat from the box will remind participants of the work done and the experienced emotions of the slaughter. It is intended to make them consume more consciously and deliberately.



** Initially, I planned on this final aspect being a small cremation ceremony, where some part of the animal was burnt and it's life/soul/spirit would be commemorated and farewelled. Part of the beauty of preparing pork however is that (as the Andalusian saying goes) "The only thing you cannot eat of a pig, is its squeak" (DeletedUser, 2011). All parts of a pig's body can be utilized in some way or another and it would thus be a waste to burn some of it. Regardless I believed the gathering around a fire would still serve a purpose as outlined above.

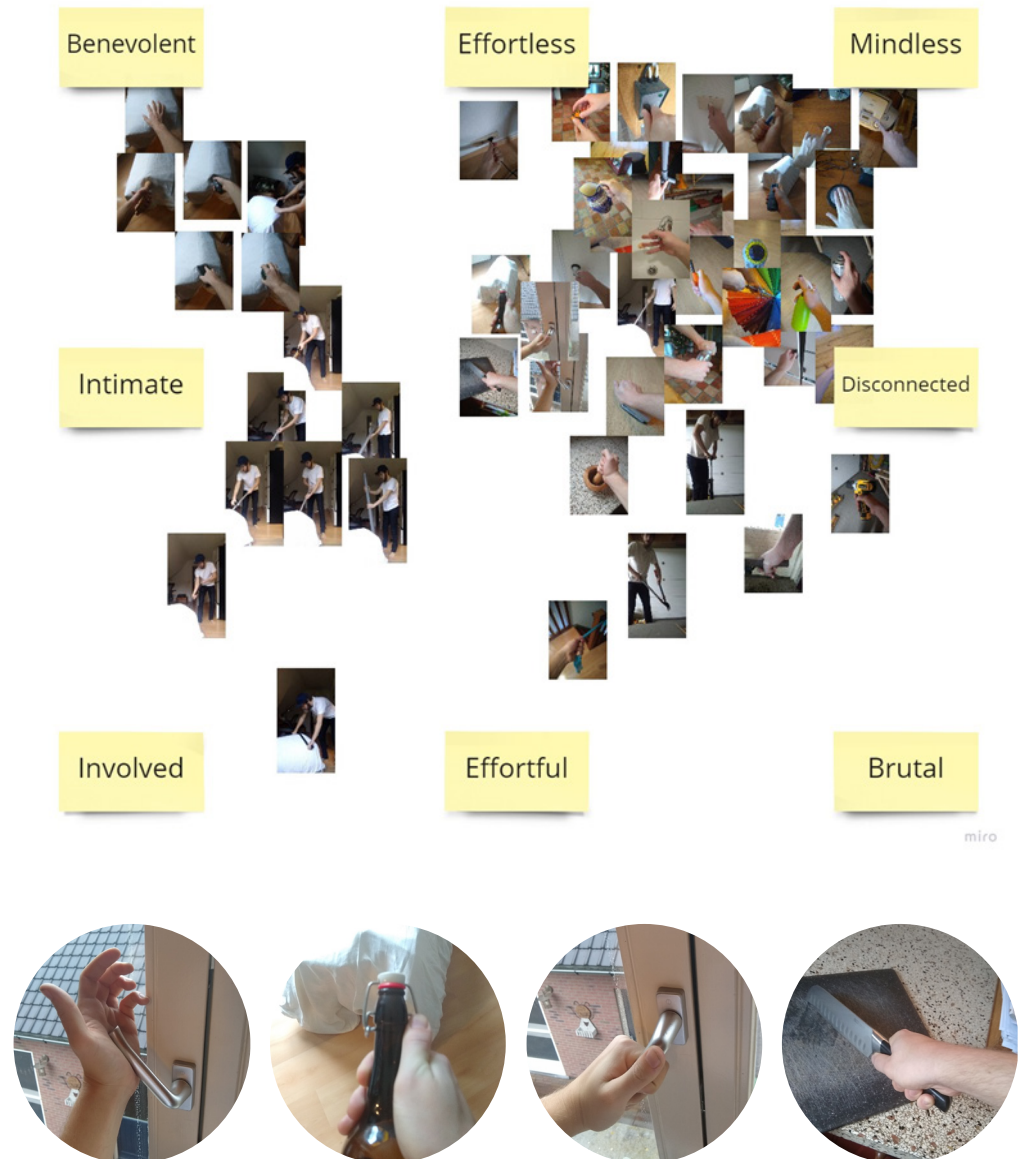
MEDIATING THE KILL

The climax of this experience in many ways is the kill of the animal. It is the moment harm is inflicted on another living being and the action that most people would dread most. Therefore, I decided to take extra care in designing this moment and to create some kind of mediation that would make the experience as desirable as possible for human and animal.

I consulted with my professors, who advised me to take an embodied approach to this challenge and look for movements and interactions that seemed befitting the act of ending a life. I looked for movements and interactions and mapped them to a two-axis spectrum of values. The consideration I was making was that the person involved would want to feel engaged and connected to a certain degree; a sense of struggle and effort feels justified, and in their absence, the interaction would feel careless, stoic and apathetic.

If we reason from the animal's interest however, the struggle and effort are not something we wish for them. We would like them to die in relative peace, inflicting minimal suffering. Interactions with too much involvement from the human felt brutish to me.

The most befitting interactions were found in the middle of the spectrum. Operations that were abstract enough to feel appropriately distant from the animal that still carried some of the same intent and feedback connecting them to the act of taking a life. These were actions like twisting the handle on a window, pressing down on a stapler, or opening a swing-top bottle. They were deliberate, controlled motions which asked a certain strain or effort from the user. They initially offered resistance but eventually snapped, offering a clear sense of completion and a release of the tension built.





I incorporated these interactions into a system consisting of two parts: the first mounted to the side of a fence for the human to interact with, the second strapped to the head of the pig to deliver the kill. A big handle is inserted into the fence-mounted part by the human. Once inserted it conveys a slight pulsation through vibration. It is pushed down upon, offering mechanical resistance until snapping into its final position, where it will cease to vibrate.

The pig will wear a head-mounted captive bolt system that can be triggered remotely via radio-waves. This mount has a comfortable fit and will be applied in the early morning on the day of slaughter, meaning the pig has time to get used to it before it is used. A captive bolt is a system currently used in slaughterhouses which fires a rod into the skull of an animal, rendering it senseless. It is of importance that as soon as the shot has been administered, a butcher tends to the animal to cut its throat and let it bleed out as this is the thing that ultimately causes death.



Participating in this part of the slaughter is optional to guests, who can also choose to watch on from outside of the pen. After the captive bolt has fired pigs can react unpredictably, some will drop to the ground motionless while others might twitch and kick violently. These are involuntary contractions of the muscles, because the muscle cells still function while the brain has been destroyed. Nonetheless it is still a pretty horrifying sight to see.

A visual demonstration of this device can be found on my demoday page (Baselmans, 2020b).

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RESPONSES:

I am French, and meat has been for generations, even millennium in our culture (good luck trying to change this culture) Then you have India, where most people are vegetarian. Maybe it would be nice to really understand history (how we evolved, where we come from), ethic, values of particular cultures?

I am rebased as a vegetarian but started eating meat at a later stage in live (only chicken and fish) For me the biggest problem with meat culture is the distance between the living animal and the consumer. In the Netherlands we do not like to be confronted with the death of our food. A final though is the concept of regenerative farming, in which animals also kept to improve land quality and actually reduce CO2 emissions.

I personally suffer from a lot of food allergies, making meat one of the few things I can eat. Many of the current solutions are difficult for those who are not able to eat “everything” and results in being forced into meat. Meat also seems to have an unfair notion of being masculine, which is toxic to the industry.

I don't buy meat anymore myself, but still eat it when others serve it. Especially at my parents this is often a problem. In our family cooking and long meal prep is a major way of showing your love and appreciation. We don't really know any good vegetarian stews or difficult vegetarian meals, so when they go all out, they don't know how to use meat.

Eating with family and friends. It sounds weird that this is because of the meat, but meat has a certain

characteristic that makes it a bit more cozier. Gourmetten for example. And the smell of meat.

Meat culture in my view is something that is changing over generations [...]. My parents eat meat almost on a daily basis and they do not really like the vegetarian alternatives (I think this comes from the AVG culture in NL). My dad always feels like there is something missing when there is no meat / still feels hungry afterwards. As soon as I moved out I started eating less and less meat and now only eat it 1/2 a week and only try to buy good meat. I think it is changing in our generation more towards something that should be enjoyed, something that is special. Not something that should be eaten everyday. Might be interesting to look at how beliefs differ between generations and if you can make them understand each other / teach each other something.

For me meat is a product that should be taken with balance and variation. Besides the strong connection with culture I think it is also important to take knowledge about body implications of meat. There is quite a challenge in how to guide society to understand variation between alternatives of meat, but also to understand when to choose for meat.

It is embedded in everyday live, everywhere you go you see meat and it is just assumed that you eat it. This creates an environment where people don't want to stop or can't stop eating meat.

It makes me think about Christmas, birthdays and my home. But now I think we should see it as a kind of cake, to eat it less but also to value it more.

That depends on the life stage I was in. It used to be associated with dinner, family, cooking, nice taste. but now I associate it more with global warming and unnecessary pain. I can get in heated discussions with friends who do eat meat, especially when they mention that they want to live on a healthy planet in the future and that is why they eat meat.

Super interesting approach, never thought about the meat rituals being an important consideration for the transition into a lab/veggie world. Like with Sinterklaas, you can see that a lot of people need a lot of time to transition to a new normal. In the Sinterklaas case COVID and BLM were main events that played a tipping role in the discussion. What will the future events surrounding meat rituals be? When will the image of a man in apron with beard and beer at the barbecue with steak be old-fashioned and ugly?

Meat is something I try to reduce in my daily life and is something I would not eat at my parents' home that much but living with friends I find it hard to cut out from my diet.

(From a vega perspective XD) I have the feeling a lot of people are afraid of what they will miss when they give up (partly) on meat, also because they don't want to feel guilty, so they rather look away. I have the feeling it's seen as something masculine as well.

Your video is amazing!! Regarding meat, I think there is a trend with chefs like Ottolenghi who

make being a vegetarian sexy. In the end food is about the interaction that you have with each other while dining. (Expect for a bbq, that's when we truly want to have some meat)

Really like that you see eating meat as an experience.

There is a nice research at WUR, together with a Norwegian university (I don't remember the name but I know people there), working on how to make insect an acceptable edible food. Their strategy may interest you quite some. I am from a Jewish tradition (long time ago), and meat has a very special position in the food, with many forbidding aspects, as well as incompatibility with other foods... we can discuss it once if you want.

Since three months, I'm a vegetarian. As my mother and sister were already for a very long time (can't remember they weren't) I always felt like I had to stop one day too - because I was quite aware of all the bad sides - but I could not stop yet (tasted too good). However now I just quit, as planned, and that feels good.

How do you balance the need for a sustainable lifestyle without sounding morally superior to your family and friends?

This is a really interesting topic, since I feel like there is still a lacking aspect in the meat replacements. To research maybe do some interviews with butchers of go to a meat lover festival. Something to get the juices flowing! Also don't forget the rituals that we have created around meat! The typical AVG'tje is an example.

For me it is mostly the ritual, I guess. I would like to see very cheap meat gone and make it more of a

special occasion on which we eat meat.

I think it would be nice to also have a look at different cultures, and the role meat plays in these (concerning rituals, religion etc). I don't think it is necessarily true that we have consumed meat in the same way through history as portrayed in your video (very nice video btw). Our meat consumption has increased substantially, due to economic welfare and growth. Would be interesting to take this angle as well :)

Since my parents have raised me without eating meat, I am very unknown to the 'meat culture'. To me the meat culture of others makes me think of 'unaware', 'habit', unnecessary.

I really like the video and the scope of your project. In my case, I usually eat vegetarian but on special occasions our family eats meat. (christmas e.g.) I feel like for many people, they don't mind eating meat because they don't really see the impact it has and they're not actively looking for sources that will tell them about consequences of eating meat in terms of the environment.

When I think about food culture, I think about it being bad for the environment. It is kind of a double thing for me, since I like to eat meat, but every time I do so, it makes me feel like I should eat something that isn't bad for the environment. I remember seeing some video about a chef who made meat, but vegetarian, and people didn't notice that it wasn't real meat. That would be really cool.

It is something that was normal to eat. Currently I try to eat less meat.

Especially the masculine part triggers something.

A very interesting and accurate topic, even though I'm not a vegetarian I notice that I am eating less meat because friends do so and therefore I also think it's less necessary. I'm curious to see what role this will have in the future.

I do not buy/cook meat, but I eat it very often because my boyfriend (Portugese) always cooks with meat. It is so deeply rooted in his culture that I feel it is very hard to stop eating meat for him and his family.