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Title

Eating in Theory

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/50k2w626>

Journal

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY, 30(2)

ISSN

0964-0282

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Publication Date

2022

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produced through his ethnographic sketches on silence as a gendered and hesitating space and a stance of refusal, withdrawing, constraint. Two essays more directly address feminism: Hande Birkalan-Gedik traces a possible history of feminist ethnography in Turkey, discussing how anthropology has been imbricated in political and cultural contexts and the autonomy of feminist activists, while Marina Della Rocca proposes a reflection on the risks and possibilities to be true to her own identity as a professional in a women's shelter and the practical and theoretical feminist issues raised by her new role as researcher. Through a historical perspective, Daniela Salvucci reconnects to the book opening, focusing on Elsie Masson and her influence on Malinowski's writing style. The journalist and writer figure emerges as a talented woman – with a passion for travelogues and novels that she shared with her husband – through her capacities to depict by a fresh style, both in the Australian Northern Territory and fascist Italy, where she and her family settled in South Tyrol in 1922.

If all the contributions deal with issues that resonate with one another – the risk and responsibility to expose self and others, the inevitable derailing, the knot of ethics, theory and narrative genres – the text does not intend to propose theses or to confront more exquisitely political themes, but rather to bring out the productivity of an ethnographic sensibility. The book lets emerge the continuous workings that are part of a lateral and spurious history, made by scholars who were – and still are – marginal in very different manners (mainly white females, men and women of colour, black, native, non-heteronormative and queer anthropologists) but that keep questioning ethnography. The final masterful comments by Marilyn Strathern, who participated in the symposium, propose further insights and remind how the people ethnographers work with play the decisive role in helping them to keep authorial self-consciousness at bay.

In an age of calls for an engaged and public anthropology and the need to rethink ethnography as a peculiar and effective modality to account for reality, this book represents an important reminder of the role that gender and feminism play in making ethnographic accounts and anthropological reflections productive in specific ways: pushing practices, theories and styles beyond disciplinary boundaries, where, nonetheless, the contribution of anthropological thought and practice plays a crucial role.

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Mol, Annemarie. 2021. *Eating in Theory*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 208 pp. Pb.: US\$24.95. ISBN: 9781478011415.

This is eating in theory. A delicious book. I devoured it as if I was eating after having starved for a long time, after having been told that critical theory 'has run out

of steam' and after anthropology has been given a 'thick' descriptive/practical turn on the conviction that it has indulged in and even been absorbed by 'theory'.

Moved by a serene and humble writing, Mol's critique is concerned with the hierarchical conception of 'the human' as it is taken up by what she calls 'twentieth-century philosophical anthropology'. Its representative thinkers, the thinkers that Mol wants to 'shake up', are Hannah Arendt, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Hans Jonas and Emmanuel Levinas. According to this conception, 'the human' is distinguished from other animals by 'his' capacity to think. Thinking and speaking are highly valued, while bodily practices shared with other animals, such as eating, are rendered simple cyclical activities done merely for the sustenance of life, for the mere satisfaction of bodily needs, as best exemplified in Arendt's *The Human Condition* (1958). There are two hierarchies established in one move: the human is elevated above other beings with his cognitive capacity which is, in turn, elevated above eating and made the defining feature of the human.

Mol asks what if we try to understand human beings by focusing on eating practices rather than thinking and speaking? To do so, she takes up 'general terms' that define human beings and challenges them, citing cases of eating, more properly *her* eating, or situating herself in different cases of eating. Yet in the side-lines of the book flows 'the other's eating', where Mol carefully cites the cultural differences in eating and being (non-)human. The general terms under consideration are being, knowing, doing and relating.

The book consists of six chapters. Except the first, 'Empirical Philosophy', and the last, 'Intellectual Ingredients', which serve as introduction and conclusion respectively, each chapter is devoted to one of these general terms and attempts to illustrate how eating might challenge the dominant perception of the human built on an unchallenged understanding of these terms.

In the first chapter, Mol details her approach and methodology, aptly siding with Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) where he tries to show that language is *in* the use through 'quasi-ethnographic snapshots' derived from everyday situations and Foucault's history of the present, or critical ontology of ourselves, where the present (in Mol's case, 'the human' and the catastrophes our human-centrism brought about in the present) is problematised by turning to other possibilities (i.e. eating) that might lead to seeing the present differently. Mol thus proceeds without ready-made concepts or a theory that defines its object in advance. This helps her manage an openness throughout the book.

In thinking of being, in the second chapter, attention to eating practices illustrates that being does not just mean being enclosed in the body but that the human bodies/beings are porous. They constantly take the outside in, and the inside gets out and entangled with the outside. In knowing, Mol's eating situations show that there are no clear-cut distinctions between the knower and the known object, and between the fact/descriptive and value/normative statements. In the case of doing, usually thought as voluntary and wilful action undertaken by a conscious agent, eating demonstrates that doing is not fully controlled by a single agent

but is rather a collective task that is spread out, explorative and iterative, rather than a task completed by an agent. Also, in doing of eating, good and bad are not always self-evident. This is I think what the book itself *does*. It produces an open, iterative theory through eating rather than a pre-defined theory eating up situations of eating. And, finally, when we think of relating as an ethical practice, we usually understand it as a practice of giving. However, eating, fundamentally an asymmetrical relationship, helps us see taking, too, as a way of relating. This, for Mol, necessitates the reformulation of our ethico-political question: not how to achieve equality in giving, but how to avoid the erasure of difference in taking.

It feels like there is something ‘wrong’ in Mol’s eating throughout the book and yet some others’ being unable to eat, which is a question admittedly left out of the book. But on a closer inspection, it, especially the chapter on relating, makes us acutely aware that our eating is always somebody else’s starving. Also, sometimes the supposed challenges of eating situations do not necessarily sound convincing, but this does not hurt the overall critique and courageous openness of the book. Another curious thing is that all the ‘philosophical anthropologists’ Mol shakes up are somehow related to the phenomenological tradition. One wonders, perhaps because the book is written by ‘a student of Foucault’, whether this should have been clarified. Yet none of these prevent the book from being a fine contribution to anthropology and philosophy as well as food studies, science and technology studies, and environmental studies.

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