

A Convergence between Anthropology and Literature: How Reading, Writing, and Ethnography Intertwine

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ABSTRACT

This text examines the convergent and double-sided relationship between anthropology as an ethnological study, which of necessity uses literary language - and writing itself as a subject for ethnography. Cultural Reader-response theory shows that every text involves some participation on the reader's part and is not a solitary unchanging object. This response will itself be a function of social and cultural relations. At the same time, cultural and social life, studied by anthropologists, only becomes explicable through language and the results of ethnographic fieldwork are always, therefore, mediated by linguistic forms. The development of literary anthropology gained momentum in the 1980s but had already germinated in the pioneering work of Levi-Strauss whose work on kinship structures in the 1940s and his study of myth turned the attention of anthropologists towards the important and neglected dimension of language. Since then it has been recognised that an anthropologist's work is diminished if theoretical and linguistic aspects are unaddressed, and the realm of socio-anthropology has been enriched. Disciplinary and genre distinctions have become very fluid in the past few decades and many university departmental studies now blend literary criticism with culture studies, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, folk discourses, and hermeneutics. While a standard definition of one of any two terms may be possible, it may not always be practical. Therefore, the definition of these two terms—anthropology and literature—needs to be updated from time to time to reflect ongoing developments and the advancements taking place in various fields. In particular, it is evident that coinciding with the linguistic turn in English literature studies, the discourse of anthropology has become permeable. A broad 'literary anthropology' can become possible as a science only if it maintains a dialogue between ideas, actions, and texts. The results and conclusions of this study substantiate the inseparable and interdependent relationship between two traditional approaches to investigating man as a social being.

Key words: Anthropology, Literature, Ethnography, Culture, Discourse

INTRODUCTION

Research Problem

This centres on the generation of meaning in both disciplines, which have expanded and coalesced in recent decades. Anthropology has been surveyed as literature while literary works have been treated as fieldwork resources. New terms such as 'ethnocriticism' have emerged. Literary and anthropology has emerged as a significant subject in its own right in many institutions of learning. This has enabled since the individual writer of literary works of any kind, as a unique creator of meaning has, in the past half-century, been undermined. Post-structuralist and structuralist schools have influenced both social anthropology and literature in ways that deconstruct, decentre, and dissolve the individual. A broad 'literary anthropology' has become possible as a science that maintains a dialogue between ideas, actions, and texts. Writers

such as George Marcus and Clifford Geertz have been especially instrumental in introducing the concepts of literary theory, modernism, and post-modernism into its practice, thereby deconstructing the individual researcher and historical methods of recording and conducting fieldwork. Terms like anthropology and literature can also be defined in myriad ways without one contradicting the other in any real way as the many dictionaries on the subject testify. The past few decades have witnessed a proliferation of studies concerned with intercultural and interdisciplinary perspectives of social activities which include his/her relationship to the environment, both constructed and natural, and to his/her non-verbal and verbal communications, and behaviours.

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ongoing and current developments, and the advancements taking place in various fields. Literary anthropologists argue that narrative and dramatic literature can provide a rich source of information about culture and lifestyles even for non-native readers and that semiotics constitute important material products of a culture. A novel or short story for instance reveals how cultural habits operate within specific temporal and spatial settings. The systems operating in real life can thus become visible, irrespective of the writer's intentions. The setting is also important: class identity, domestic architecture, manners, and clothing reveal as much as any ethnographic work. All these contribute to the understanding of a culture defined as an agglomeration of habits shared by those living in a specified area which is both learned and biologically conditioned. This includes various daily activities, means of communication, cultural patterns, and prohibitions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Barton, D., and U. Papen. (2010). *The Anthropology of Writing: Understanding Textually Mediated Worlds.* Continuum

Rather than exploring the works of professional writers-poets, novelists, academics, this volume looks at everyday writing as a social and cultural practice worthy of interest in itself and provides a very varied collection of essays on topics such as 'writing illness', Edwardian postcards, personal diaries and seventeenth-century French texts amongst others. Whilst stimulating, the essays range too widely and fail to convince that 'literary practices in a childcare workplace' are necessarily worthy of close study. Whilst stimulating, the essays range too widely and fail to convince that 'literary practices in a childcare workplace' are necessarily worthy of close study or that any written statement can be an ethnographic report or an implicit social critique.

Cohen, M. Ed. (2013). *Novel Approaches to Anthropology: Contributions to Literary Anthropology.* Lexington Books

This collection, which focuses on the classic novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is based on the premise that the literature of a particular society can provide rich ethnographic insights into that society - a discipline described by Helena Wulff as 'ethnographication'. The volume includes essays on the well-known works of Twain, Defoe, Jean Rhys amongst others. While the case is made that the novel is essential to understanding the human condition, how this is to be integrated into anthropological studies is less clear. Moreover, 'realist' fiction often evades that reality- by presenting marriage as a 'happy ever after' resolution for instance. The inclusion of Defoe is especially problematic. Defoe was a skillful and prolific journalist, producing much copy which was invented. His *Journal of the Plague Year* is a fiction of this traumatic time which he did not experience.

Clifford, J., and G. Marcus. Eds. (1986). *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography.* University of California Press

This exposition of cultural analysis, which effectively marked the 'literary' turn in anthropology has divided opinions since its publication. It contains a very wide variety of ethnographies that explore the nature of fieldwork and the emergence of anthropology as text - subject to literary criticism. This aspect is well introduced in the contribution of Marcus and Cushman. Other essays engage with how fieldwork affects both subject and researcher and the subjects studied range from elderly Americans (Myerhoff) to desert dwellers in Morocco (Crapanzano).

Geertz, C. (1988). *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author.* Polity

This is a famously innovative work by a prolific and sometimes controversial contributor who first suggested that ethnographers are principal authors in his 1973 volume, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. This volume again looks at anthropology and ethnography not from the point of view of fieldwork, but as literary endeavours. Geertz focuses on four major contributors to the field to explore his thesis that writing fashions facts, but without undermining the capability to accept seriously the results of anthropological fieldwork. Geertz starts with Malinowski's immersive fieldwork and moves on to Levi-Strauss, Evans-Pritchard, and Ruth Benedict. In the field, observation becomes a literary dilemma, and Geertz investigates the slippery nature of unrepeatable observations and the conceptions of 'author' in which anthropology widens. This work introduces the idea of culture as a text which can be read.

Lavenda, R and E. Schulz (2009). *Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology.* New York: McGraw Hill.

This is a very useful compendium of the major issues in cultural anthropology and especially relevant since it covers reading ethnography as a critical activity in itself. There is a very useful chapter on the chronology of anthropology as a science - covering approaches from the nineteenth century to developments in the twenty-first. Connections between different academic disciplines and different elements of culture are investigated. The definitions, distinctions, and new direction of the subject are made clear throughout the volume.

Rapport, N. 3rd ed (2014). *Social and Cultural Anthropology: The Key Concepts.* Routledge

This is a comprehensive and up to date reference work by one of the most prolific authors in the field. It covers sixty of the key terms currently used in anthropology and these range from the traditional 'kinship', 'Fieldwork', and 'Myth' to newer directions: 'Auto-Anthropology', 'Epistemological Pluralism' and 'Reflexivity'. An essay on the convergence of anthropology and creativity is especially welcome. The

structure of this work makes it easy to use as there is lots of cross-referencing. Overall, there is a trend to include terms that lean towards recent overlaps between anthropology and literature, sociology, and philosophy. The relevance of some terms traditionally associated with anthropology such as ‘ethnic’, ‘exotic’ or ‘primitive’, and which verge into imperialist notions of ‘otherness’ is queried.

Wulff, H. ed. (2016). *The Anthropologist as Writer: Genres and Contexts in the Twenty-First Century*. New York. Berghahn Books

This is a carefully collated collection of essays that explores the way anthropology can connect with many other genres and areas of study and the different ways in which anthropology can be written. An academic distinction can be a function of writing style so that an awareness of current challenges and opportunities is necessary. The anthropologist is essentially a teller of stories and this can be done via journalistic and popular writing styles as well as via scholarly monographs. This collection provides an interesting perspective on my investigation into the recent coalescence of anthropology and literature. It is evident from my researches that contemporary anthropologists cannot avoid examining their writing style and also writing within and across a range of genres.

DEFINING ANTHROPOLOGY

As a discipline, anthropology has always existed at a confluence: the word itself derives from the Greek ‘logia’ – the study of, and ‘anthropos’ – human beings. In North America, anthropology has generally been divided into four sub-fields: cultural anthropology and linguistic anthropology (which can obviously converge with literary studies) and also biological anthropology and archaeology.

Anthropology is less a subject matter than a bond between subject matters. It is in part history, part literature, in part natural science, part social science; it strives to study men both from within and without; it represents both a manner of looking at man and a vision of man—the most scientific of the humanities, the most humanist of sciences—Eric Wolf, *Anthropology*, (1974). Anthropological discourse may be said to have originated with Herodotus and his travels in the ancient world. Subsequently, anthropology as a recognised and respected discipline developed via the travel narratives produced by Europeans meeting non-European cultures via trade, exploration, or missionary zeal. In the eighteenth-century notions about ‘the state of nature’ and the ‘noble savage’ stimulated interest in faraway and ‘exotic’ peoples and this interest was further encouraged by the foundation of ethnographic museums in Europe and the USA. The idea of fieldwork developed as professional anthropologists emerged and the writing up of empirical studies based on participation and observation became known as ethnography while anthropology covered a wider ground in the study of human culture in general. Early in the twentieth century Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown, and Margaret Mead began to establish a methodology of fieldwork practice and contributed to

later movements that tried to reverse the damaging effects of colonialism on native peoples. Coinciding with the ‘linguistic turn’ in literary studies, however, the discourse of anthropology has become permeable. Its association with a discussion of myths, rituals (such as the rite of passage) and magic has been diluted.

A field of study is usually based on a language structured around terms that draw on a specific discipline or field of inquiry. Boundaries are placed on how to approach an issue and any intellectual discourse makes a particular regime of truth operational definitions are important because it has become recognised that language has power. Thus the language used in anthropological studies also has power and is not just a descriptor. Just as the emergence of theories in the 1970s about the role of the reader in shaping literary meaning produced a paradigm shift in literary studies, so the literary activities of ethnographers and anthropologists became objects of study in themselves. The traditional definition of anthropology as simply the study of human beings through time and space as Webster’s dictionary puts it, has been a greatly expanded generalisation, yet it dates from the time when an upheaval in this discipline was occurring and its terms of reference and methodology were growing even more to include hermeneutics, while the practice of fieldwork was changing in structure and intent. In current academic practice, social relations and culture are no longer viewed as static and defined objects which can be studied like an ancient Greek vase. Rather any discourse creates new relations of power, in the way colonialism and Orientalism were created and validated by the way non-European societies were represented in language.

As a starting point, however, anthropology does derive from a study of the religious beliefs, social relationships, and institutions of any human grouping. The accounts written about a particular grouping constitute ethnography. In the last half-century, however, it has been greatly expanded so that the writings of anthropologists themselves have moved from the realm of ‘objective’ and hopefully scientific recording and observation to being an object of literary and stylistic study. Meanwhile, the attempt to classify what is included in anthropology has resulted, in the last few decades, in the publication of numerous hefty dictionaries and encyclopaedias of key concepts such as *Encyclopaedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology* (Barnard and Spencer, 2002); the *Macmillan Dictionary of Anthropology* (Seymour Smith, 1986) Robert Lavenda and Emily Schultz’s *Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology* (2009) or *An Introduction to Social Anthropology* (J. Hendry, 2008). Probably the most useful and comprehensive reference work in this area, covering sixty of the key terms used from ‘kinship’ ‘fieldwork’ and ‘myth’ to ‘Auto-Anthropology’, ‘Reflexivity’ and ‘Epistemological Pluralism’ is Nigel Rapport’s latest edition of *Social and Cultural Anthropology: The Key Concepts* (2014). This does not hesitate to outline the vital questions involved in any current definition of the nature and status of anthropology. Is this undertaking ever politically correct is a question that now bedevils all fieldwork of the kind once pioneered by Malinowski, Radcliffe Brown, and Margaret Mead.

Attention has recently been focused on the vocabulary used in traditional anthropological studies: the tendency to regard other cultures as 'primitive' (for example as regards art) or to define them in terms of lack. Eric Wolf summarises this trajectory:

[Anthropology] is less a subject matter than a bond between subject matters. It is in part history, part literature, in part natural science, part social science; it strives to study men both from within and without; it represents both a manner of looking at man and a vision of man—the most scientific of the humanities, the most humanist of sciences. *Anthropology* (1974).

The permeability and malleability of subject boundaries in this area, however, makes the definition and any direction of study both problematic and fruitful. All sorts of textual material, not only fiction, is now regarded as of possible inclusion in an ethnographic field while the writings of traditional anthropologists such as Malinowski have become regarded as a form of literature (in essence, fiction) in themselves. Anthropologists' engagement with their subject matter has proved philosophically difficult since it involves both knowledges through reflection and knowledge through engagement which is regarded as cognitively opposed.

The defining, or rather re-defining and reorganising of anthropology has become an academic exercise in itself: the nature and status of the discipline and undertaking are very much in question. Anthropology has always been a holistic and comparative discipline, but the nature of any comparisons made has become questionable under the aegis of post-colonial theory. A possible casualty of this is that fieldwork involving participant observation has also become contentious as an exercise. To counter this critical turn reflexivity has become a core concept for linguistic and cultural anthropologists who are now explicit about the limits of their own knowledge and more sensitive about how material cultures are investigated and cultural objects are classified or collected. In many ways anthropology has become, like literature, indefinable in the traditional 'pre-postmodern' way. It can simply be described as a set of critical, strategic, and rhetorical practices.

THE DEFINITIONS OF LITERATURE

The dictionary definition of literature is 'any writing with some degree of merit and language that serves as a gateway to the literary world.' Literature is a manifestation of human expression, especially in its written form. Literary studies comprise fiction, drama, and poetry but the scope of literature most often denotes fictional narratives, even in subsets such as the historical novel. Literature encompasses aesthetic and imaginative expression of thoughts, ideas, and feelings. It is no longer studied in isolation but as a cultural artifact. The conditions of creation and reception of any literary work are important to critics and literary historians. Artifice and aesthetic value are, however, no longer the criteria for defining a work as literature: written material of all kinds - brochures, pamphlets, publicity materials, advertising copy, blogs, diaries, song lyrics, laundry lists, newspapers, journals, passenger lists, posters, political manifestos, even timetables can be

included. As a result, the teaching of literature has become less Eurocentric, and literary education is more focused on understanding the human condition.

Literary texts, however, are now generally regarded as forms of discursive data to be deconstructed in a separate anthropological field. Information about customs, manners, and myths can be fruitfully derived from fiction of any calibre. In 2004 Richard van Oort sought to clarify this new endeavour and to validate it in an essay on 'The Critic as Ethnographer'. In this influential essay he argues that though literature is still to be studied in departments of English, it has extended into realms of writing long regarded as non-literary. These un-literary creations include all sorts of significations such as clothes, music, and advertisements but also court transcripts, pamphlets, diaries, and even laundry lists. Early modern cultures can for instance be subject to a new form of ethnography that goes beyond the fieldwork study of living societies into a sort of fieldwork of the archive. The process is complicated by many possible approaches. Traditionally, the language of a discipline is constructed around a set of terms based on a specific field of inquiry. Boundaries are placed on how to approach any issue. However, much as the fieldworker is influenced by and influences his subjects, reader-response theory recreates the reading of fiction as a ritual which involves a different temporal continuum and acting out of meaning. This blurring of the traditional distinction between the cultural and the natural sciences has affected our understanding of literature and what might be classified as such. The interpretation of any textual material has become an interpretation of the transmission of culture. Any text can be understood as a material object which is not purely linguistic but exists within a web of rituals, practices, and institutions. The reader of a fictional text for instance may themselves undergo a sort of 'rite of initiation' – emptying their mind but also bringing an experience to the process of reading. Literature and anthropology are congenial disciplines in that both depend on acts of interpretation and in that symbolic representation, whether in writing or rites, seems intrinsic to the human condition.

THE SCOPE OF ANTHROPOLOGY

In the twentieth-century literary theory and the academic teaching of literature (especially via the 'New Criticism') have been explored and expanded by what has become known as the 'linguistic turn' - inspired initially by the logical positivists but dominated and driven by deconstruction and post-modernism, post-colonialism and post-structuralism. As a result, the teaching of literature has become less Eurocentric and literary education more focused on understanding the human condition and therefore closer to the practice of anthropology.

Yet there are still questions to be explored: How do literary works function as acts of communication? How do they produce meaning? How are they linked to other cultural productions? How do they both shape and reflect their societies? What is their role in the maintenance or disruption of social systems and hierarchies of power? Literary studies have come much closer to anthropology in that they are no

longer just an interpretation of certain 'sacred texts' and a focus on canonical texts as an interpretation of a whole cultural system.

Anthropology is diverse and covers a much wider territory of study than other social sciences. Indeed, anthropology shares its topics with biology, geology, zoology, and a host of other subjects, although the purposes of other studies and its investigation are often different. Anthropologists are largely concerned with human beings and their varying aspects including their technologies, kinship systems, religious beliefs and practices, skin colours, and every other aspect of the human. Major leitmotifs include reflexivity, narrative, agency, and experience. As a discipline, cultural and social anthropology has always been balanced between detailed ethnographic investigations and the building of theory and has been successful in challenging culture-specific assumptions about peoples of other religions and races. As Norman Denzin puts it:

For postmodernism, ethnographic practices are ways of acting in the world. These ways of acting (interviewing and observing) produce particular, situated understandings. The validity, or authority of a given observation is determined by the nature of the critical understandings it produces (Denzin, 1997).

In recent years feminist anthropology has developed to counter previous male bias in the field. This new direction involves both 'salvage' anthropology of historical fieldwork notes and new field research. The assumed divide between nature and culture, or that between domestic and the public has been fruitfully challenged by a new generation of scholars. Societies of hunter-gatherers have received renewed attention due to the gender equality discovered there. Other cross-cultural perspectives have used linguistics or symbolism to extend our understanding of women on various social systems. Traditional anthropology, such as that practiced by Levi-Strauss associated women with nature, men with culture, and ritual order but this viewpoint are being re-assessed. Since the 1970s, however, newer perspectives are more diversified and include autobiography, life history, and socio-linguistics. While extending the scope of anthropology many of these studies call into question the findings and assumptions of earlier practitioners in the field. Core areas such as studies of family, kinship, and socialisation often reveal the masculine bias of the researcher's own society. Currently, anthropological studies are prefaced with terms such as 'physical', 'cultural', 'linguistic' 'historical' 'comparative' or 'feminist' while conflated terms such as 'palaeo-anthropology' extend its academic scope and influence. This represents a fruitful branching out of the original subject divisions but has also led to concerns that many anthropologists are overspecialised. The current academic climate of reflexivity and multi-culturalism demands 'new forms of inventiveness and subtlety' from practitioners. (Clifford, 1986:23). Criticality in anthropology has gained ground in recent years and many of its concepts and terminology have become associated with colonialism. Linguistic markers such as 'community', 'native' or 'indigeneity', or even 'museum' have acquired negativity even though re-formulations

have proved difficult. Anthropology continues to extend its scope into new areas and into new ways of looking at social behaviour. The prolific Nigel Rapport, for instance, has developed a cosmopolitan project in this discipline, looking at identity but avoiding multi-culturalism in favour of finding the common threads that underlie nation, society, gender, and culture. He argues that 'cosmopolitanism' can become a new methodology.

THE SCOPE OF LITERATURE

Many critics argue that literature was the creation of the late eighteenth century, boosted by the rise of nationalism and the nation-state. A century ago literature comprised texts with distinct cultural and aesthetic value although it did attempt to include the totality of a particular subject or period. In 1973 the critic Tzvetan Todorov explored the notion of literature and concluded that there were no features that defined and divided literature from other kinds of discourse. Since Aristotle's *Poetics*, theoretical approaches to the study of literature have expanded hugely and both literary critics and philosophers have concerned themselves with the technical and cultural constructs of narrative. The logical nature of fictional discourse has long been disputed while the category of 'fictive utterance' has expanded.

In the twentieth-century literary theory and the academic teaching of literature (especially via the 'New Criticism') have been affected by what has become known as the 'linguistic turn'- inspired initially by the logical positivists but dominated and driven by deconstruction and post-modernism, post-colonialism, and post-structuralism. Between 1950 and 1980 conceptions of literature changed radically. Continental philosophers such as Jacobson, Foucault, and Derrida overturned many assumptions about what a literary text actually was. Roland Barthes challenged the idea that literary principles were universal. Language, and especially that found in literature, was regarded as slippery and unreliable: meaning did not just reel outward from utterance but was part of a complex structure of practices. The relevance of the criterion of truth to fiction has long been a staple of the philosophy of criticism but more recent texts have been regarded as inherently unstable and from the 1960s onwards the new historicism constituted literary history in terms of power relations. This has brought literature and anthropology closer. Cultural studies are now integrated into the teaching of language and literature at undergraduate and postgraduate levels while the practice and epistemology of anthropology and history have been influenced by an awareness of discursive practices. Literature and associated studies have become pluralised and historicised while the ideologies and economies behind the production of any text are being explored.

This expansion has its roots in the changes driven by new philosophies of post-modernism and post-colonialism. While the literature has become more inclusive it has simultaneously become more confusing for the reader since expectations of style or content, nourished by clear classifications of style, subject matter, and structure are no longer met. Nevertheless, the writer deals with words and meanings. Prose leans

towards clarity whereas poetry adheres more to the emotions invoked by paintings, music, and sculpture. The philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre in *What is Literature* argues that only prose can give a proper reflection of the world, whereas other types of writing are ends in themselves. Literature can be a means of freeing the reader while engaging him/her in the world. Sartre's insistence on the radical mission of literature illustrates how limiting definitions can be: he despised the idea of literature as a pleasant 'sedative' and would allow it only as a form of action.

THE GROWING CONVERGENCE BETWEEN ANTHROPOLOGY AND LITERATURE

Both subjects are prescribed and studied by students at the undergraduate and the Master's degree level. While literature can be studied using one's mother tongue, there are countless students worldwide who study English Literature even though English is not their first language. It should also be acknowledged that not all undergraduate courses offer Anthropology as an optional subject, while most colleges do offer English Literature as one of their optional subjects for study. There are many colleges in Asia and elsewhere where Anthropology and English Literature are offered as two inseparable subjects at the undergraduate level. Understanding other people, their cultures, and their needs is a key need in today's fast-changing post-industrial world. The humanities encompass a full literary culture, and that literary culture is deeply embedded in English literature.

In the late 1970s, influenced by the work of Clifford Geertz, a number of academics began the development of a literary anthropology (See Clifford and Marcus, 1986). Geertz had started to look at culture as if it were a text to be analysed in the same way that people looked at literature. This idea was extended into that of the quasi-scientific 'thick description' which tried to look at the webs of significance within a culture but has been criticised as reducing anthropological studies to unscientific 'gossip' (Reyna, 1994). However, the existence of ambiguity within any interpretation of human action still causes problems while the action of reading has itself become subject to analysis as a form of ritualization. The relationship between literature and anthropology is multi-faceted as argued by Darren Byler and Shannon Dugan-Iverson (2008):

What is the work that stories do? 'Literature, Writing, and Anthropology' (the name of the e-zine) seeks to address this question by creating a space in which fiction and anthropology will converge, collide, and collapse into one another. This collection, a collaboration between *Cultural Anthropology* and the literary journal *American Short Fiction*, features articles, interviews, short stories, and a lecture by eleven authors. Though we have separated the fiction from the anthropology, there is no way to easily demarcate where fiction ends and where anthropology begins (Byler, Darren, and Dugan-Iverson, Shannon, 2008).

This reference focuses on writing but there is also an area to be explored within the process of reading itself. Mircea Eliade, a religious historian, suggests that reading itself

includes a mythological function – not only because it has replaced the function of oral culture and verbal recitation in archaic societies, but because while reading it is possible to 'escape' from time in the same way ancient practices allowed for emergence into another temporal universe (Eliade, 1959).

A confirmation of the usefulness of this focus can be found in a quotation by Nigel Rapport in 'Literary Anthropology' (<http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/>). The new field of literary anthropology actually covers two fields of study. The first is an exploration of the role that literature plays in social life and individual experience, in particular, social, cultural, and historical settings. Included in this study lies the question of what literature is. Literary anthropology can be understood here as an exploration of different genres of expression, and how these genres can be said to have historical specificity, a cultural evaluation, and a social institution attached to them. Secondly, literary anthropology is a study of the nature of anthropology itself as a discipline.

The intense self-consciousness of both anthropology and literary studies has been a feature of critical work in this new field for the past few decades. Norman K. Denzin. (1997) for instance, explores new practices in ethnography for the twenty-first century based on an understanding of textuality as performativity and on the recent turn of the ethnographic gaze simultaneously inward on the self and outward into the social context. The anthropology of literature is thus a doubly difficult task: the experience of interpreting and reading in an academic context reveals that academic discourse is itself a ritualising frame of interpretation and only one of many such acts in contemporary society. Stories can become templates for existence, complicating the task of the unravelling the nature of a society for the observing or participating anthropologist (Grimes, 1993). As a result of new ways of thinking about texts a subset of both anthropology and literature studies has now emerged: the Autoethnography of Reading. Any encounter with a text now requires intense self-consciousness and involvement with both semantic and wider cultural contexts. This sort of endeavour is evident in the writings of Robin Ridington, an anthropologist concerned with native Canadians. Ridington (1982), is interested in the importance of stories and myths as a bridge between culture and subjectivity. She challenges the usual anthropological distinction between narrative and myth which can obscure the interdependence of these kinds of communications. In this way, the literary imagination can be reconceived, recovered, and also re-evaluated for the twenty-first century. Seeing literature as a cultural practice which can be investigated by anthropologists renews our understanding of concepts such as creativity and imagination, but also gives both literature and anthropology an important role within academia and the wider society at a time when such studies risk being diminished in importance. A dialogue between literature and anthropology can have many facets as the preceding discussion has intimated.

THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OR CORRELATION BETWEEN ANTHROPOLOGY AS LITERATURE:

In 1904, the International Congress of Arts and Sciences in St Louis was addressed by Franz Boas the anthropologist.

Boas regarded himself as a founding father of a new study discipline even though the word 'anthropology' was known in the sixteenth century and the profession of an anthropologist at the close of the eighteenth century. Boas aimed to dismiss what he termed the speculative anthropology of earlier generations and to place the discipline firmly within the sphere of science. This is the direction it had moved into very gradually since Hippocrates, in 500 BC had looked at culture as a product of place in an essay on 'airs, waters, and places'. In the nineteenth century, the British Association for the Advancement of Science would offer anthropological guides to travellers while the myth of the 'noble savage' took hold in the literary imagination. Boas divided anthropology into three areas: the geographical, the historical, and the business of classification. The historical aspect involved at this time horrifies current academics since it was based on the premise that the Western nations had advanced and evolved, marched on as it were, while other nations and races had not. Boas, however, was keen to define anthropology as an endeavour that looked at differences rather than as something that led to an overly positive view of industrial culture. This was in part the result of the literary endeavour of writing up results for anthropologists such as W.H. R Rivers. The actual labour of writing led him to appreciate the complexity of the Melanesian culture he was studying and to abandon the effort of making his work fit some sort of evolutionary trajectory. During the First World War, Malinowski, a Polish anthropologist explored tribal life in the Trobriand Islands in the Pacific, pioneering deep involvement in a culture as a method of research. His writings and diaries are now often included in literature studies rather than as quasi-scientific anthropology. In those early days of anthropology, the focus was almost entirely on the Pacific Islands and Polynesia before interest shifted to Africa in the 1940s. The early pioneers of anthropology, with their literary turn, have since been criticised for holding a 'mosaic' view of culture - each community brings separately adapted to its environment. Their status as scientists has fallen while anthropology has come full circle to examine the societies which invented it and the linguistic means used to promote it.

The many changes brought about in literary studies as an academic discipline as a result of the onslaught of theory in the last half-century have enlarged English studies as a discipline in unexpected ways. Ethnographic writings have themselves become objects of literary study, especially in North America where anthropology has been re-figured as a way of writing, rather than a way of (scientific) working. Texts are often regarded as formal objects and stripped of context. Since the 1980s, the ways in which ethnography has been recorded has become perhaps unduly important; literary procedures have obscured a concern with content under a possibly too eager commitment to intellectual and social radicalism. 'Thick Description' has replaced much contextual evidence while a blurring of the distinction between subject and researcher has encouraged ethnographic subjects to be involved in the way they are represented. The re-assessment of Margaret Mead's pioneering work has stimulated this shift in attention. Mead's writings on Samoa in the early

twentieth century were regarded for decades as the model for anthropological research until attacked in the 1980s (Freeman). The proximity of literature to anthropology has garnered a huge momentum since then, while conspicuously rejecting the richly literary style in which much early anthropology had been recorded. Besides, published work is now often regarded as separate from 'data' such as fieldwork notes and interviews.

Despite the influence of Geertz in recent decades, the permeable boundaries between ethnography and fiction have a longer history. James Clifford for instance (*Writing Culture*, 1986) reminds us that early anthropologists including Malinowski, Ruth Benedict, and Edward Sapir had an understanding of themselves as writers and artists as well as scientists, having involved themselves first as 'readers' of a particular culture. There was an implicit understanding that creativity was involved in arranging empirical material. In recent decades 'cross-writing' has been developed as a process of freer expression in academic texts. Ethnographic fiction can provide a useful merger of disciplines and a more empathetic approach to the lives of others. If ethnographers can use their research to write creatively they may be able to highlight an aspect that had escaped classification. This sort of writing creates empathy, but also enlarges the boundaries of what counts as scholarly production. Also, anthropology as literature is likely to reach a much broader audience. At the same time, academics like to guard their subject boundaries: literature is supposedly all about language- it selectively transforms and aestheticises social material. Literature draws attention to itself while in contrast anthropology is supposedly referential. It is based on actuality and research with a dedication to actuality irrespective of pleasing language. Traditionally literature involves imagination and speculation whereas anthropology seeks to convey 'things as they are'. Yet it is clear that information on social rituals, power structures, and dominant myths is also available via the medium of fiction as the work of Helena Wulff (2012) shows and that anthropologists themselves are not averse to a pleasing literary turn of phrase. Claude Levi Strauss for instance warned of the world being subjected to a monoculture as early as 1955. The 'dreamlike promises' of journeys he writes, 'will never again yield up their treasures untarnished'.

Neither will these treasures be easy to write about for literary anthropology has multiplied into several conceptions. The anthropological examination of cultural and literary practices is the newest branch, while academics continue to court controversy about the way literary modes affect the writing of anthropological research. This has caused debates about metaphorical language, the writing of fiction as ethnography. It is also worthwhile to inquire exactly where the interrelationship or correlation between these two subjects actually exists. For instance, politics and economics are interrelated and correlated, and their ongoing close relationship cannot be disputed or denied. Since anthropology is a new and growing, developing subject in its own right, and more branches of the subject spring up regularly, the relationship between the two will likely flower and flourish more over time. The two subjects complement each other in more

ways than most people realize—so much so that they are interdependent and yet dependent on each other. When archaeology discovers a fossil, that fossil is studied at length by anthropology and is documented by anthropologists, historians, biologists, and others concerned with the fossil from their point of view. A single fossil can yield many multi-dimensional clues about the people and their culture which is likely long dead and gone. Anthropology brings these individuals to life again by reconstructing their past and their culture. The prose that is written by anthropologists is also studied by students of English Literature or Language, not only because of its anthropological content but also because of its linguistic point of view. Thus, literature enables the past to be reborn before our eyes and brings the details to live again right before our eyes

While every subject has its own, and the subversion of accepted ethnographic structures. Yet another branch of literary anthropology is the exploration of conventionally historical literary texts as a type of ethnographic source. Writing anthropology, of whatever kind, requires a specialist vocabulary that it uses to describe or talk about it, the name for these words/terms in linguistics is its register. There are many words used in anthropology that are part and parcel of the subject anthropology; that is, without the use of these specialized terms, any description of anthropology would be incomplete at best, and this has led to more division and towards a proliferation of linguistic concerns. Some of the specialist words that are often used in anthropology are acculturation, affirmative action, ancestral spirits, animism, bilateral descent, caste, endemic, holism, homogenous society. These and many other similar words have already passed into linguistic anthropology which is concerned with the study of how language is used in various social contexts. Anthropological linguistics thus focuses on the interplay of language and culture.

The definition of anthropological linguistics is, according to David Crystal (2006):

A branch of linguistics that studies the role of language about human cultural patterns and beliefs, as investigated using the theories and methods of anthropology. For example, it studies how linguistic features vary to identify a member of a speech situation that can be explored from an anthropological point of view, such as everyday interaction, ritual behaviour, political discourse, verbal art, and educational practice. The term overlaps to some degree with ethnolinguistics and sociolinguistics, reflecting the overlapping interests of the correlative disciplines involved- anthropology, ethnology, and sociology. When the research takes place primarily within an anthropological paradigm, the subject is known as linguistic anthropology and the practitioners as linguistic anthropologists (David Crystal, 2006).

With this greater use of specialist terminology, the interplay of language and culture has become both more facilitated and furthered. The fact cannot be denied that the broad subject of anthropology has produced many sub-branches, each with its own specialist vocabulary.

The permeable boundaries between ethnography and fiction have a long history. The greater concern of anthropology

with linguistics has grown out of the extension of the scope of anthropology into so many other disciplines. The imaginative engagement that early anthropologists found with Pacific Islanders has been transferred to the practice of literary anthropology- which now includes a huge variety of source materials such as memoirs and also film. It is, however, evident that the social-realist novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have been most often mined and also that this branch of anthropology allows for 'literary' modes of writing which those who regard anthropology as a social science dismiss. Those who reject anthropology as an arts and humanities subject dislike the fluidity of stylistic borders which arts subjects encourage. Some radical commentators, such as Ruth Behar, suggest that ethnography can be fruitfully regarded as a literary form. She wants anthropology to be emotionally compelling as well as rigorous and engaged.

CAN ANTHROPOLOGY AND LITERATURE BE MUTUALLY COMPLEMENTARY?

In recent years, various literary approaches to writing anthropology have surfaced while fiction has been lauded as a sort of 'speculative anthropology'. The 'writing culture' debate which occurred during the 1980s has brought literature into the forefront. A major contribution has been the volume edited by Helena Wulff (2016) which specifically addresses the idea of the anthropologist as a writer today. Wulff looks at a wide variety of work, naturally including Clifford Geertz who coined the idea of the anthropologist as an author in the 1980s through a conventional literary analysis of the most well-known figures in the field. A literary approach to ethnography, it has been argued, widens the scope of the anthropologist, and discussed, confirmed the relationship, avoids marginalisation of minorities. Wulff's volume, however, reveals the professional difficulties experienced by anthropologists who face restrictive approaches to their work within the academic hierarchy. A prose that is full of jargon and without passion or emotional engagement has been the ideal, but this is being challenged by those who want to actively engage their readers, to humanise others, and to testify to human diversity. Wulff's volume of essays indicates that Geertz's plea for more literary anthropology in the 1980s has not been heeded by the academic establishment despite some compelling investigations. The Russian playwright and short story writer Chekhov for instance did meticulous research on the penal colony at Sakhalin Island before incorporating the facts into his stories.

These current debates on the anthropologist as a writer raise the issue of definitions and limits. Some practitioners challenge the trend towards excessive literariness in this area and find creative writing an unnecessary indulgence which might sink the discipline if too many novelistic, self-reflexive ethnographies are produced, while the mirror image of this trend is that anthropologists look into fictional words as being better accounts of society than those produced by social scientists – and perhaps desert fieldwork altogether. This issue is complicated by fiction writers becoming anthropologists while ethnographers, such as Paul Stoller, write fictional accounts of their ethnographic research. Originally,

the study of literary practices in a culture was limited to oral and performance cultures in traditional areas of investigation. Anthropology has recently been used to unearth some of the mysteries and literary practice (mostly written in English) as a target for ethnography. Literary prizes, festivals, reading events, book clubs seem to provide new material for the anthropological study of literature. The nineteenth-century 'realist' novel is considered especially fruitful in yielding information about societies of the time. Conversely, the works of Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead, both pioneering ethnographers, are now viewed as having literary merit and analysed accordingly- without any reference to the scientific nature of their findings. In a society. At the moment, there is an enormous potential for contemporary culture to be the subject of anthropological enquiry. A new series of books on the intersection of anthropology and literature is being published by Palgrave-Macmillan, and the aim is to examine new objects of ethnography and new genres of literature. The field is expanding as well as the history of reading and narrative ethnography categories such as ethnographic fiction, autoethnography, food writing, and cultural identity are included. Literary anthropology is likely to create many new hybrid forms of investigation while utilising existing theories of post-colonialism or post-modernism.

The new forms of literary anthropology will likely move in a more controversial and more politicised direction. In the e-zine, *Cultural Anthropology*, for instance, an article on the Anthropology of Mines addresses the use of landmines and the devastation of land on the Korean Peninsula. The topics or issues taken up by anthropology and literature can be very much the same; while anthropology may cool-headedly attempt to state the facts and figures as they exist, writers use narrative to bring these facts and figures apply to people and living. Here too, however, we still see the interdependence of the two subjects; in many ways, they are inextricably linked and united. Meanwhile, fiction can incorporate seemingly scientific anthropological discourse: Lucy Corin's short story 'Madmen', for example, describes a fictional coming-of-age ritual in which adolescents are paired with madmen, a conceit which echoes both classical anthropology in the Turner/Vann Gennep into life.

CONCLUSIONS: SOME NEW DIRECTIONS AND THOUGHTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The foregoing has tried to establish the ongoing relationship between anthropology and literature - a relationship that was forged at the height of modernism and at the apex of imperialism when Anthropology first emerged as a validated academic discipline. It needed to occupy its own intellectual sphere and it did so in creating ethnography, or the recording of a group's way of living in writing - a procedure spearheaded by Malinowski. As a result, the monograph dominated the next half-century of anthropological research, even though it tended to objectify and mark as 'nature' groups living apart from Western civilisation. In the 1980s, however, new directions became visible as anthropologists became aware of the exclusion and creation of otherness they had practised. One of these new directions was the development of applied

anthropology- a practical endeavour to ameliorate economic and social issues. A new self-awareness in the discipline as a whole, even to questioning the viability of anthropology as a whole, has stimulated different areas of endeavour - many of which now focus on the literary nature of the discipline as well as looking at literature itself as a useful source. The development of the discipline and its merger with literary studies is likely to be diverse. Some anthropologists are adopting different methodologies and new literary objects of study welcoming poetics and reflexivity into their enterprise; others have found that a newly reflexive anthropology can still leave space for the observed and the observer.

The future of anthropology may be a regenerative rejection of fixed categories of analysis, displacing oppositions to literature or social science and finding correspondence in both objects and methods of study in new and newly relevant areas. There are compelling arguments for bringing the worlds of anthropology and literature together: it seems that moving forward one can adopt the optimism of Kenneth White who writes, as an intellectual nomad, that there will soon be not only new philosophies of poetry - but a new poetic anthropology. As Nigel Rapport has argued in his works of the last decade: anthropology deals with human identity within nature and culture and it must do so via language. Literature and anthropology co-exist and coalesce but they do so in ever-changing and unpredictable ways. There can be no single anthropology, no uniquely coherent theory or practice as there can be no single practice of literature- there remains only the questioning of the nature of these two discourses.

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