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Windows, mirrors, and tables: methodologies and theories of anthropological photography

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Windows, Mirrors, and Tables:

Methodologies and Theories of Anthropological Photography

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Preface

This thesis has been in the making for about two years and has significantly influenced my academic and artistic interests in anthropology and photography. My interest in photography began many years ago, when I was given my first very old and outdated digital camera. My interest in anthropology also began when I was very young, some would say before I was even born. My parents, both anthropologists, raised me through an anthropological lens, teaching me about different cultures, and, subtly and indirectly, indoctrinating me with basic anthropological theory. It is thus little surprise that one of the culminations of my academic career combines my two major life interests.

At it's core, this paper is about my photographic work in the Maya town of Tihoscuso and how it engages with dialogues concerning the nature(s) of anthropological photography from the past and the present. I hope that the presentation of my work, along with the new perspective I take on its theoretical grounding, will open up new dialogues about anthropological photography and visual anthropology in general. Before jumping into the main body of work, I thought it would be helpful to have a brief contextual understanding of the history of the area I am working in and its relationship to the past.

My fieldwork, part of a larger project sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania Cultural Heritage Center, was conducted primarily in the small Maya town of Tihosuco in the state of Quintana Roo on the Yucatán Peninsula. My experience with Tihosuco began in the summer of 2012 when I first traveled to the area and stayed in the town for a month. During that time period I met people in the town who would become important contributors to the photography project in later years. My next visit to Tihosucso came in

the summer of 2015, when I first began the project of photographing the people in the town and gathering their stories. I then returned and continued this project for a month in the summer of 2016.

It seems appropriate, before jumping into the historical details of the Caste War itself, to address the day to day methodology, what we actually did in the field. Each step contributed important aspects to the products of the project. One critically important point of context involves the issue of trust and rapport in anthropological fieldwork. This project was blessed with having this rapport almost from the beginning, because of its placement within the larger project of the Penn CHC. The Penn CHC project has been working in the town of Tihosuco for over five years and during that time the people working on the project have developed a deep level of trust with members of the community. This trust was the groundwork upon which my photographic project could be realized.

My fieldwork consisted of multiple steps of community engagement and gathering of photographs and stories. Each work day, the project's team (me as the photographer, Kathryn Diserens of UPenn as translator, and Marcelina Chan Canche as our local contact/interviewer) would drive around to various interview appointments that Marcelina had made previously; often we would do 2 to 5 interviews a day. Each interview consisted of a photo shoot, where the person in the photograph had complete control over their location, time, pose, and costume in the final image, followed by a recorded interview during which Marcelina, in either Spanish or Yucatec Maya. She asked questions about the person's family, when they came to Tihoscuo, what they knew of the Caste War or the past, and what the past meant to them. At the end of the

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season, we printed large (3'x3') versions of each photograph, complete with excerpts of the interviews arranged next to them, and these were hung in an exhibition in the town's Caste War museum during the annual anniversary celebration of the war. The reception to the images was very positive, and people appreciated that their stories were going to be remembered. After the exhibition, the people in the photographs were allowed to take their own images home with them so that they could continue to remember the project and their own stories and heritage.

The town of Tihosuco and the surrounding areas are intimately tied with the events of the Maya Caste War, a large scale indigenous rebellion/revolution which occurred in the second half of the 19th century. Rather than connect their past to the ancient Maya, whose ruins draw millions of dollars of tourists money to the government every year, the contemporary Maya of Tihosuco link their heritage back to their ancestors from the Caste War (R. Leventhal 2012). The Maya, while acknowledging their more famous ancient lineage as direct ancestors, do not invoke them when constructing their own cultural identities or discussing their heritage. Instead the focus falls on the events of the Caste War. What follows is a short summary of the Caste War and its causes.

The Maya Caste War, which began in 1847, does not have one single point of origin, one single cause. Instead, it should be seen as the culmination of many hundreds of years of oppression and enslavement of the indigenous Maya people. Since the Spanish conquered the peninsula in the 16th century (Reed 2001: 5), the hierarchical social and economic systems, with the indigenous Maya set in the place of peasant laborers or even slaves, were met with numerous indigenous rebellions and

uprisings. By the 19th century, with the rise of sugar as the area's primary cash crop, large tracts of land were taken from public domain, where indigenous Maya traditionally farmed for subsistence, and were given to private entities, *haciendas,* focused on planting sugar and other crops to turn a profit. This land grab, along with ever rising taxes on the indigenous peasants and their elite, was a significant, but not the only, factor in the cause of the Caste War (Rugeley 1996: xiii-xiv). Other contributing factors include the increasingly ambiguous position of the Maya elite, the role of the Catholic church as oppressors, and the tantalizingly close possibility of freedom from these systems. This is a highly compressed account of the lead up to the war, but it provides the necessary framework for understanding the expressions of the contemporary Maya peoples.

The Caste War itself can be broken down into two primary time periods, that of initial revolution and that of the Talking Cross. The initial fighting began with a spark in 1847: the execution of Manuel Antonio Ay, a Maya elite and *batab* of Chichimillá. Ay was involved in a conspiracy to start a revolution and stockpile military supplies (Reed 2001: 63-64). This set off a series of attacks by Cecilio Chi and Jacinto Pat, the primary Maya leaders of the early revolution, on the towns of Tepich and Tihosuco. The Caste War had officially begun. Fighting continued for roughly two years, and the Maya gained a significant amount of territory in the Yucatán, almost capturing the capital of Merida, before Pat and Chi were assassinated by their own disgruntled armies and the Yucatecans (white descendants of the original Spanish) quickly rolled the Maya gains back. The indigenous armies retreated all the way back to the southeast of the

peninsula, where they began to assess their situation. At this point, the revolution seemed in dire straights until one symbol reinvigorated the Maya to continue the fight.

The Talking Cross, a cross purported to be able to speak the word of God, was discovered in a grotto in a town know as Chan Santa Cruz. It has been described as a last ditch effort by a threatened culture to revitalize itself (Reed 2001: 147). In this case the revitalization was not only religious, it also seeped into the military side of society. The cross promised the Maya immunity in battle, and began rallying the beleaguered peasants to re-engage in fighting the Yucatecos (Reed 2001: 150-152). Over the course of the next decade, led by orders emanating from the cross, the Cruzob (followers of the talking cross) viciously carved out their own territory in the south and east of the Yucatán, before the fighting dissolved into the occasional battle and skirmish, the war never truly over, continuously smoldering. There are multiple dates cited as the end of the Caste War, but the most common one is 1901, when General Ignacio Bravo occupied the area that is now the state of Quintanna Roo, including the Maya capital of Chan Santa Cruz (Rugeley 2001). The war, then, came to an unfulfilling and ambiguous close, with tensions still lingering.

Today, the history of the Caste War holds strong in the town of Tihosuco (R. Leventhal 2012). As one of the origin sites of the Caste War, the people who live there feel a deep connection to the war and what it means for their identity as Maya people. Tihosuco was abandoned during the war and subsequently repopulated in the 1930s, and the war continues to leave an impression on the daily life in town even more than 100 years after its conclusion. The large church in the central town square is missing much of its back section after it was blown off by explosives during the war. There is an

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annual week long festival dedicated to the anniversary of the war. The local Caste War Museum is a hub of social life in the town, and people come every day to learn more about their past. The Caste War continues to live on through the stories told every day by the people of Tihosuco. It is these stories that this project tries to embrace through photography and the narratives associated with the photographs.

As I stated above, this thesis has been a long time coming, and it has not always been an easy journey. The fieldwork and the writing has combined to become a significant portion of my academics at Vassar over the past two years, whether through summer fieldwork, independent studies, or the actual process of sitting down to write a 60+ page body of work. Throughout these two years, However, I have not had to journey down this intellectual road alone. I have always been greatly supported by those close to me and those with an interest in what I do and what I want to do in the future. It is with great pleasure, then, that I am able to list some of those supporters here. My sincerest thanks goes to my two thesis advisors, Colleen Cohen and Louis Romer, for guiding me through the stimulating but sometimes arduous process of theorizing, writing, and keeping me focused on the topics at hand in my work. My thanks as well to the chair of the Vassar College Anthropology Department and my major advisor, Candice Lowe-Swift, for always being a heart-warming and supportive presence whenever I see her. My thanks as well to Tiffany Cain, Aldo Tapia, and especially Kasey Diserens of the Penn Cultural Heritage Center Tihosuco Project for supporting me in every way and for coming into the field with me on a daily basis. My endless gratitude to the people of Tihosuco for letting me work with them and for giving the images in the project such a warm reception. I especially want to thank Marcelina Chan Canche for

Chapter 1
Introduction

The field of anthropology has a long and intricately interwoven history with the medium of photography. Both disciplines are originally products of the 19th century, forming in a time where the sciences, arts, and humanities often overlapped in their activities. Thinking at the time was dominated by theories of evolution, and anthropology was no outlier. The young field of study, while searching for its own unique aspects, sought after answers to the question of why people (mostly colonized indigenous groups) act the way they do, and how they got that way. For hundreds of years, travelers, missionaries, and traders had been writing descriptions of the exotic cultures they encountered. Anthropology then was the (somewhat) professionalized iteration of these earlier writings, and as such it required a method of accurate confirmation for the written works it produced.

Enter photography as the very medium anthropology was looking for. While the ability to project light in the shape of images had been around for a long time in the form of the *camera obscura,* it was only in the 1820s that such images could be captured and preserved through chemical processes (Ransom Center 2016). From there, the process was refined until it became feasible to have cameras that could be carried into the field, although they were still rather bulky. By the latter half of the 19th century the camera was becoming more and more common and was taken up by anthropologists and colonial administrators looking to document their travels and their studies.

Photography as a medium offer a level of perceived reality and accuracy that is unmatched by all but the most excruciatingly photorealistic paintings, which attempt to imitate the view of the camera. Thus it is no surprise that throughout its history photography has been seen as a documentary form, a conveyor of truth through the process of capturing and storing the objective medium of light. Anthropologists in the early days of both photography and their own discipline picked up on these traits and began to incorporate photography into their studies. Since then, anthropological photography has been continuously changing. Many writings have been done on the ethics, methodologies, and theories of photography, putting forth numerous understandings of the medium and its purpose in anthropology. It is these writings which I will grapple with in this thesis.

I believe that throughout the history of anthropological photography, the form has been written about in one of two theoretical ways: using the analogy of photography as either a mirror or as a window. Each of these paradigms promotes different understandings of photography. Whereas the window model sees photography as a mechanism of truth, as stated above, the mirror model represents a theoretical shift, a direct response to the window. The mirror seeks to complicate the window by occluding the clear, accurate view it provides. It does so by bringing in concepts of context, materiality, and memory. These two theories follow a generally historical trend, with the window model acting as the initial starting point and the mirror coming into conversation in the 20th century, after Malinowski's usage of photography in the Trobriands.

However, I do not believe that either the window or the mirror offers a complete understanding of the power of photography in representing other peoples and cultures. I

offer up a third way of looking at anthropological photography: the analogy of the table.

The table, I believe, allows the photographs to become the center of dialogues external

to the photograph itself. In this manner, the photograph as table expands the frame of

the image through a continuing renegotiation and focusing of the meanings given to the

image, similar to how the mirror works to expand the border of the image by providing

historical and personal context to the scene at hand.

This paper is divided into three chapters, each dealing with one of the theoretical

models of anthropological photography I have delineated. The first chapter is a history

of the early days of the relationship between anthropology and photography, grounded

by the overarching contemporary understanding of image production as a way to share

and document the reality in front of the camera, as a window into another world. I will

examine different case studies which illuminate the different ways in which the idea of

photography as a capture of reality was used to further ideologies of social evolutionism

and physiognomy, which were common at the time. The second chapter shifts into the

20th century and examines the writings that have taken place in reaction to the window

model. Visual anthropologists in this stage took a more reflexive approach to their

discipline, examining how early anthropologists used photography and how we can

complicate our readings of the images that are produced through visual anthropology

throughout its history.

Lastly, I will outline my own theory of the anthropological table. This will be done

by examining my own work done in the Maya town of Tihosuco in the Yucatán of

Mexico, where the theory was developed. The concept involves a focus on collaborative

processes of image making, where the outsider anthropologist/photographer/ speaks

and works with the indigenous community to create images and representations that display the voice and reality of the people in the images while simultaneously seeing that such images are understandable to an outside audience. Striking such a balance allows the images to speak on multiple levels to the heritage the Maya feel towards their ancestors from the Maya Caste War of the 19th century, while also letting the images accurately speak for their subjects in locations outside the community so that they can bring attention to their cause and their community as they see fit. Such a collaborative process helps to unpack Maya cultural heritage by creating intra-community dialogues about such heritage in relationship to the images that are bing created. This model of anthropological photography has developed in relation to those of the past; thus the mirror and the window are crucial precursors to the table.

I believe that this new analogy of the photograph as a table will provide a better understanding of how images are used in anthropology, and the risks associated with using such methodologies by focusing in on issues of collaboration, dialogue, and the positionality on the anthropologist/photographer within relationships of power and representation. The table analogy provides what I hope will become a new methodology for anthropological photography, one that I hope will promote more cross-cultural empathy and understanding in a fast-paced world filled with unfounded beliefs, hatred, and exclusion.

Chapter 2

Windows: Early Photographic Theory and Anthropology

Since nearly the inception of photography in the early-mid 19th century, the technical apparatus of the camera has been used for what could be called "anthropological" purposes, that is, taking pictures of people (most often dark skinned people of foreign cultures colonized by the West) in an attempt to better understand them while simultaneously exoticizing them for western visual consumption (Rony 1996: 7-12). As anthropology was finding its feet and developing itself as a field, photography offered up a way to freeze time and capture, supposedly, exactly what was in front of the camera, resulting in an image that could be reanalyzed again and again (Edwards 1998). It is no coincidence, then, that photography and anthropology began to become popularized around the same time. In early anthropology's positivist stage, with its desire for hard facts and data about far away communities, photographs proved to be the perfect unit of knowledge (Scherer in Edwards 1992, 32-34). Material photographic prints were easily traded and distributed amongst the armchair anthropologists common at the time (Wright in Edwards 1992, 20-21). The idea of photography as anthropological data or evidence was codified and promoted by anthropological associations in the Western world. Most famously, the guide book *Notes and Queries on Anthropology,* first published by the Royal Anthropological Association in 1874, eventually began to provide directions on the use of the camera in anthropological fieldwork (Garson and Hercules 1892, 235-236). This book had a very large influence on anthropologists working in the 19th century (Urry 1972), leading to a number of

anthropologists citing their use of photography in the prescribed observational manner. The anthropological photograph, therefore, began as a source of self-sufficient data, fully legible and intelligible.

Because it supposedly captured data (light) directly from nature, the photographic image was initially considered an infallible and authentic vision of "what was there." The similarity to the organ of the eye was crucial in this belief. Because the camera theoretically saw the world in a manner similar to our eye, the camera was just as "truthful" as our own personal senses (Wright in Edwards 1992, 18-20). Photography thus provided the extra "eyes" anthropologists needed to describe both the exterior and interior of others in order to provide supposedly accurate statements and generalizations about them. This understanding of photography from its early history was thoroughly grounded in in the idea that the camera perfectly reproduces what is in front of it. Thus, as above, the photograph became a source of data even more valuable than the subjective written word. It allowed anthropologists and other curious people to glimpse into a different, far away, and exotic reality, to analyze and attempt to make sense of whatever was within the frame. Anthropological photography was seen during this early era of the second half of the 19th century as a window into another culture, a framed vision of how other live (Pinney in Edwards 1992, 76,). This idea of the photograph as window is crucial to this time period, and it ties together many of the understandings and theories surrounding the anthropological image during this era (Rony 1996: 13).

The idea of the photograph as a window, popularized by a 1978 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (Szarkowski 1978), models many of the theoretical and practical

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elements of 19th century anthropological photography. By acting as a plane of glass (which many early photographs were actually made on), the photographic window only allows for one way communication, with the viewer peering into the scene in front of them. While there is meaning making in this process, it is again one sided, lacking the dialogue between the viewer and the person in the photograph. Thus the meanings that can be given to the image must originate from the biases and frameworks brought to the viewing, where the viewer searches for how they can fit their ideas into the visual puzzle in front of them. In this sense, the photographic window is exploratory, a way in which we might better understand the world, and *realist* in that is theoretically dedicated to the objective truth of the situation (Szarkowski 1978). This idea of "looking out" is important because it creates a limiting frame, literally and metaphorically, around the photographic image. Every image has a frame, a border beyond which we have no information. Similarly, a window has a frame that reduces our knowledge to only what can be seen through the pane of glass. The photographic window thus provides a sense of reality with inherent limitations, unable to be connected to any greater world. When you look through at a photograph, without any contextual knowledge other than that which you bring yourself to the experience, what you want to see is what you get, and any analysis or data must be extrapolated from what is contained within the frame. Any intrusion into the frame by the photographer will detract from the clear glass viewport into a different world we are otherwise provided.

This chapter, although ostensibly a history of early anthropological photography, is tied together by the theoretical concept of photography as a window into different worlds or different cultures. The chapter will walk through three case studies of various

anthropological photography that shed light on various parts of the theory of photograph as window. Thus this chapter can most accurately be described as a "theoretical history" or a "history grounded by theory." Each case study was chosen because it adds a different element and level of understanding of the photographic window, how it was used in different ways and thought of during the time period, and how it reflects the general practices of the time period. The studies will address issues of representation of other cultures by Western anthropologists, how photographs were used as sources of biological data, and how the nature of anthropological photography slowly shifted towards a more emotional and connected medium. Each of these topics show how the anthropological window functioned within 19th century understandings of culture and the nature of photography, and the underlying ideologies pervasive in anthropology at the time, such as social evolutionism and survival of the fittest, a hierarchy of races, the ability for the photograph to act as a portal for the viewer, and the idea that the external appearance was intricately tied to ones internal being. Hundreds of other photographers and series could illuminate my points equally and add even more layers to the knowledge base, but to incorporate even a few more would be an undertaking more appropriate for a published book.

The first photographic case study to examine is that of E. H. Man, a colonial administrator and amateur photographer working in the Andaman Islands for the British government between the 1870s and the early 1900s. Man, along with his contemporary Maurice Vidal Portman, created extensive collections of the native Andamanese people (Sen 2009, 365). These images provide an example of how typical British colonial/ anthropological photography was done in the late 19th century. In essence it is a sort of

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baseline upon which other case studies would be built. We may look at this example as a standardized generalization because the photographers adhered to many of the common practices at the time. Man, for example, followed the photographic instructions outlined in *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* very closely, stating after he received his new copy, "I have worked almost entirely upon the guidelines therein laid down" (Man 1882: 69). His photos were designed to answer specific, standard cultural questions in *Notes and* Queries, on subjects such as greeting customs, artifact production, and political structures (Garson and Hercules 1892: 104, 151-154). This standardization of practice led, in the Andaman Islands, to the creation of images that reinforced the conception of photography as a means of observation and a means of representation. By providing a photographic window into the culture and life of the Andamanese peoples, Man and Portman represented, through a visual focus on ritual, dance, and production that would provide anthropological "knowledge" to them and a thrilling sense of exoticism to the lay viewer, the Andamanese people as primitive savages, distant peoples that must be studied scientifically to be understood.

Man's photography was concerned with capturing and documenting the Andamanese as accurately as possible. This approach entailed two slightly divergent forms of photography from Man. His first style involved the capturing of images that documented daily native life in its various forms (Pinney 2011, 37). These images embody the concept of the photographic window, "accurately" displaying the forms of culture and savagery were being performed in front of the camera. Group images (Fig. 1) present the Andamanese people as objects to be viewed, following along with the methods outlined in *Notes and Queries* (Edwards 1989, 73). When Man turned his

camera on more active cultural situations (Fig. 2), he captured rituals and daily life, freezing their actions in the chemicals on the glass plate. Such photos were attempts, partially, at salvaging the culture Man felt responsible for helping to destroy (Edwards 1992, 109, 113). The images, therefore, act as a window of preservation, a view into a culture that has been changed or decimated by colonial rule. They allow amateur anthropologists and other curious individuals in the Western world to peer into a different world in an attempt to draw out ethnographic analysis. Through such viewing and analyzing, the photographic window helped to reinforce the conception of the Andamanese as noble savages, a primitive culture slowly dying out that must be preserved (Edwards 1989, 76). Unfortunately, as Edwards points out, Man was no more than a passable photographer, and his images tended to lack in both scientific rigor and aesthetic qualities of beauty (Edwards 1992, 110).

The other side of E.H. Man's photography in the Andaman islands skews more towards the scientific side of anthropology. In addition to his attempts at documenting the cultural life of the Andanamese, Man was also very interested in using photography to gather "scientific" data about the native islanders. This data primarily took the form of anthropometric measurements, such as height, body size, and head size and racial type. To this end, Man took many photographs that were dedicated to the purpose of scientific anthropometric data (Edwards 1992, 110.) Photographs of this type involve the use of measuring sticks to show average height compared to Europeans (Fig. 3), and an attempt at capturing rough anthropometric data of native islanders by photographing them against a blank background in very formal poses (Fig. 4). These images act similarly to Man's more cultural pictures in that they were meant to be viewed as

glimpses into another world. Although the audiences might be slightly different, such scientific photos are still windows peering onto the physical bodies of the Andanamese, comparing them to the taller white Europeans, and attempting to gather data about native body proportions. However, while Man attempted to gather hard scientific measurements through his photographs, as Elizabeth Edwards says, he was foiled by the limits of the photographic medium and, "These later photographs have little of the scientific rigor envisaged by Lamprey or Huxley…" (Edwards 1992, 110). Man's images thus failed to capture the data he set out to capture because, as we will see later, the idea of the photograph as a piece of hard scientific evidence will be met with multiple obstacles that challenge the fundamental understanding of photography as a window onto truth.

The second body of work I will examine is that of Thomas Henry Huxley and John Lamprey, two mid-19th century British anthropologists who attempted to create standardized means of measuring and comparing the human form through the use of photography. Their approaches took to the extreme the treatment of the photograph (and the human subject) as a unit of data. Their use of photography as a tool in anthropometry belies a deep faith in the photograph as a clear window showing scientific truth and reality to all who look at it. For Huxley and Lamprey, and all others that followed their photographic guidelines, there was no distinction made between the photograph and its referent, the human body (Barthes 1980, 5). This allowed the photograph to stand in for the real scene in front of it, complete with measurements and all, making the photographic window a means of communicating "true and accurate"

measurements of the human subjects and acting as a confirmation of their racial makeups.

Both Huxley and Lamprey's photographic methods relied on creating a standardized scale upon which people could be document, measured, and compared. For Lamprey, the question of comparison was of vital importance, as it represented his quest for complete visual and scientific knowledge of the bodies of the world (Pinney 2011, 29). To this end, he devised a system, outlined in an entry in the *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London,* to create such comparative photographs. The basis of the system consisted of a black backdrop and a wood frame lined with string to form perfect 2x2" squares (Lamprey 1869, 84). The subject to be photographed would then be placed at a specific distance in front of this grid, posed, and photographed (Fig. 5). With this method, the subject was isolated from any background surroundings or context, they became simply bodies to be measured and compared, devoid of culture or even humanity (Pinney 2011, 29). These images could then be used to compare what were called "racial-types," to understand the morphological differences of the bodies of different groups opening multiple windows and comparative views onto the indigenous body. Despite his attempt at rigorous standards, however, Lamprey's system fell victim to the reality of the photographic window. Even with the grid of strings behind the subject, the photograph could not reliably replicate the reality of the situation. Comparisons could not be made because fine measurements could not be extracted from the image (Spencer 1992, 103).

Huxley's system, which he designed because of his desire for ethnological data and his disdain for Lamprey's inaccurate system (Edwards 2001, 135), also involved the

decontextualization of the subject. Huxley would photograph each subject fully naked, in profile and frontal views, next to a tall measuring rod, sometimes supplemented by seated images with a smaller measuring stick for the cranium (Fig. 6). In an attempt to prove both photography and anthropology as disciplines of science and fact, and to potentially neutralize Lamprey, Huxley circulated multiple letters around the Ethnological Society of London and to researchers around the world asking them to use his new system which worked towards a unified model of anthropometric photography:

> Great numbers of ethnological photographs already exist but they lose much of their value from not being taken upon a uniform and well-considered plan. The result is the they are rarely either measurable or comparable with one another and that they fail to give that precise information respecting the proportions and the confirmation of the body which alone are of any considerable worth to the ethnologist (Huxley 1869, in Spencer 1992).

The system proposed by Huxley was sent out and used by anthropologists in many British colonies to gather seemingly systematic data on various body types.The returning results were not promising and did little to further the view of photography as a purveyor of scientific data and knowledge. There was a wide range of photographs sent back, and none taken in exactly the same manner (Edwards 2001, 138). Here Huxley struggled with ideas of uniformity and fact in the photograph. Images were taken at different distances, from different angles, or with the wrong poses. Stature variance proved to be an issue, as reliable height measurements could not be made or compared if subjects slouched (Spencer 1992, 100). Ultimately, Huxley's bid for creating a standardized form of anthropometric photography failed because of his system's logistical complexities and formalities, which could not always be followed to the letter and made extraction and comparison of data impossible (Spencer 1992, 100-102; Edwards 2001; Maxwell 2008, 33).

In both Huxley and Lamprey's cases, their models, based on the factuality and truth of the photographic image, ran into issues on this very subject. As was discovered, the camera and the eye do not see or visualize the world in the same way (Spencer 1992; Wright 1992) whereas if an anthropologist were to attempt measurements on a real subject, they would be able to adjust their perspective and viewpoint to gather data. However, when viewed through the window of photography, such objective measurements became impossible to gather, as the viewer was fixed to a single view through the window, at the complete mercy of the posing, scale, and exposure of the image itself. In these cases we can see an attempt at documenting reality through photography taken to its theoretical extreme. While thought at the time to be grounded in the reality of what was in front of the camera, photography proved to be easily manipulable.

The last case study here pivots us away from the view of photography as a medium of cold, culturally neutral facts and towards a more emotional and connected vision. The images of Everard im Thurn, working in what was then called British Guiana in the 1880s-1890s, display less rigidity and more spontaneity than previous bodies of work. I believe that im Thurn's pictures make our view through the photographic window a bit clearer, a defogging of the view-screen. By looking at his photographs, we get a better sense of the culture and personalities of the people in the images compared to the images of Huxley, Lamprey, or Man. Im Thurn's photographic spontaneity and technical skill with the camera helped him produce not only images that depicted people "as they are," but also more aesthetically pleasing images than those of the anthropometrists (Fig. 7) (Tayler 1992). Additionally, im Thurn made personal

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connections with the native Guianans he was working with, and this shows in his pictures, which carry more intimacy than the previous works we have seen (Tayler 1992, 190). Therefore, in im Thurn's work we begin to see a transition from the idea of *realist* photography, dedicated to exploring the surface appearance of the scene, with measurements and disengaged spectating, towards a more *romantic* approach which uses emotion and a connection to the camera and the photographer as a key component (Szarkowski 1978, 19). Im Thurn's work is the beginning of the shift from the photographic window to the photographic mirror. As Tayler points out, in some images, like Figure 8, this intimacy edges into a sense of intrusion and we see distinctly the reactions of the people being photographed, a recognition of the camera and its role in the scene (Tayler 1992, 190).

Im Thurn's work still attempts to capture the daily life and culture of the indigenous peoples of Guiana. However, he was not focused on anthropometrics or racial-types, but was more interested in using the camera, "For the accurate record, not of the mere bodies of primitive folk... but of these folk regarded as human beings" (im Thurn 1893, 184). Thus we see an attempt by im Thurn to open up the viewing of exotic cultures, to see them as people with cultures and lives. While this does not fix the problems and power dynamics inherent in creating or viewing photographs of indigenous people in a colonial setting, it represents a sometimes subtle shift towards a photography of humanization.

The photographic window is still wide open, only this time it has been shifted to point the viewer at different aspects of humanity. Cox, writing about im Thurn's 1893 lecture *The Anthropological Uses of the Camera,* argues that while many see im Thurn

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as the pivot point away from seeing photography as infallible, im Thurn was still enamored by the supposed truth-telling qualities of the photograph, and simply turned his camera on the more "anthropological" sciences, dedicated to studying culture and society (Cox 2007, 353). This is evidenced by what im Thurn says in his 1893 lecture itself. He, like other anthropologists, wished to see his discipline as an exact science. Additionally, he saw photography as playing an important role in the "salvaging" of so called "primitive" cultures through photographic documentation. Thus for im Thurn the camera is still a tool for the observation and documentation of other peoples. However, in his work he focuses on the concept of trying to humanize his subjects, depicting their material and ritual culture. To create this window into the culture of another, exotic group, im Thurn formed closer personal bonds with his subjects, bringing with these bonds a recognition of the photographer's role in making and capturing a scene. Im Thurn's humanistic turn also begins to twist the photographic window into a mirror.

In all of these cast studies we see the concept of the photograph as window develop in different ways. In the 19th century, there was an understanding that the photograph could perfectly replicate the scene in front of it, that "the photograph never lies," and as such that viewing a photo was as good as seeing the thing it represented itself. This view of photography was grounded in the perceived similarity of the camera to the eye (Wright 1992). My theory is thus that the photograph acted in this time period, as well as later on, as a window through which one could clearly see exactly what was on the other side. This provides a model for understanding the perceived truth people saw in the photograph. Additionally, in a window, there can be no communication

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between those on either side of the pane (image), thus creating a barrier between those in the photographs and those viewing them.

With E.H. Man, we see the window play out in his attempt to document and salvage the culture of the Andaman islands, freezing moments in time as evidence of exotic cultures that people could gaze at. The work of Huxley and Lamprey delved deeper into the idea that the photograph could provide an objective image that could be measured and compared. By creating systematic instructions for anthropometric photography, Huxley and Lamprey attempted to build up a vast comparative knowledge of the different "racial-types" in the world through the use of photography as a unit of data. Lastly, Everard im Thurn partially went against the previous anthropometric work, saying that anthropological photography could be used to document living cultures and living people, painting a picture of what far off indigenous groups acted like on a day to day basis. Im Thurn is commonly considered to be a transition point towards humanizing photography. Through personal connections and a recognition of the role of the camera, im Thurn began the process of seeing photography not as a window to gaze at others through, but as a mirror used to reflect back on the wider contexts and relationships at play in anthropological photography. Part of this shift in model from window to mirror concerns not just the photography itself but also what is written about it, as in the 20th-21st centuries there begins to be an abundance of reflexive literature upon the nature of photography and its relationship with anthropology. It is to these more modern reflections and connections to which we now turn.

Chapter 3
<u>Mirrors: Reflections on the Natures and Meanings of Photography</u>

While the early history of anthropological photography saw the medium as a mechanical truth-telling device to be used as a method of documentation, in more recent times many authors have theorized about new ways in which the nature and role of photography in cultures should be considered. In this chapter I will explore these concepts while I position them within the concept of photography as a mirror. The mirror analogy complicates the relationships between reality and image, photographer and subject, anthropology and photography. The photographic mirror reflects back on us both historical and political contexts, relationships of power, as well as the nature of the photograph as a piece of material culture. The photographic mirror is the next stage of development from the photographic window. As anthropology moved away (partially) from trying to see itself as a rigorous science, its relationship with photography changed (Banks and Morphy 1997). Anthropologists, when working with still images, began to consider the theoretical and tangible natures of the photograph and the complications that arise from them. They wanted to understand their position in relation to the photograph as well as the larger structures and relationships surrounding power, history, and images, for these are the systems that truly give a photograph meaning.

Despite the change in analogy, the photograph itself does not change from one time period to another. While technological developments made cameras smaller, easier to use, and more widely accessible, the same basic mechanics result in a similar end product, a tangible photographic image. Rather, it is the conversations and the

theoretical viewpoints surrounding the photograph that changed, creating multiple understandings of the photograph over time. The photographic mirror reflects back the ideologies and culturally constructed assumptions of the photographer, displaying the subject through the lens of the producer of the image. Thus, instead of a medium of pure "truth," reality printed on paper, the discussion shifts towards the socially devised and constructed meanings and visions that we give the marker of truth. Truth and reality, in the photographic mirror, become fluid and ever changing labels that differ based upon the relationship between the viewer, the subject, and the photographer. This polysemy is an important subject that lies beneath the rest of this chapter. Like the Mirror of Erised in *Harry Potter*, everyone who looks into the photographic mirror sees something different, what they most desire based on their cultural contexts.

In the remaining portion of this chapter, I will pull out a few of the key points and complexities that have been raised by more contemporary theorists. These issues are key to understanding the progression of thought on anthropological photography. One of the main concepts revolves around the context in which the photograph is placed. We cannot see the photograph as having meaning by itself. Alone, it is just an image of content, lacking a way to guide the viewer towards specific meanings. Instead, we must place the photograph in its political and ethnohistorical contexts. This is the act of "expanding the frame" of the photograph, looking beyond the edges of the image and seeing what meanings it reflects back onto us (Edwards 2001). Lastly there is the consideration of the photograph as a piece of material culture. How does the photograph function as a tangible object in different cultures? Often this has been closely tied with cultural memory and ways of keeping the past alive by reflecting it back

onto the present (Wright 2013). All of these issues underlie the general shift in attitudes towards anthropological photography we see starting in the mid 20th century.

Thus an important part of the theoretical shifting towards the photograph as a mirror is the acknowledgement of the limits and strengths of the camera's point of view. In each photograph taken, there is a conscious decision by the photographer (and others involved in the image making process) of what is and is not within the visual frame. These borders delineate what was the focus of the photographic process. In the window model of the previous chapter, the edge of the frame was seen as a hard border, asking us to lean in and view another world while simultaneously limiting the perspectives we are given to work with. With the mirror model, however, we are able to break down the boundary at the edge of the frame. As the photographic mirror is focused on reflecting back ideologies and relationships of power in the process of photography, rather than transporting the viewer to a new world/culture, the understanding of what is happening outside of the frame becomes just as important as what is happening inside of it. By expanding and breaking down the frame of the photograph and adding context, the photographic mirror can more clearly reflect what was actually happening within a photographic scene and what the importance of such happenings are. Context, particularly historical context, is crucial to understanding the anthropological photograph.

Elizabeth Edwards, in her book *Raw Histories,* argues strongly for this sense of context when analyzing colonial era photography. For Edwards, there are two types of context. The first, which she calls "containing" context, answers the technical questions of the photograph: Where is this photo? Who was there and why? How was this photo

taken (Edwards 2001: 109)? These are all the containing questions, the groundwork, the "thin description" as Geertz (1973: 7) calls it. The second type of context, named "dense context," reveals more complicated views of the meanings and relationships embedded within a photograph (Edwards 2001: 109). This type of context is more along the lines of Geertz's concept of "thick description," of describing not just what is going on, but what meanings are being constructed. To fully unpack a photograph and expose all of its meanings, both containing and dense context must be included and must interact with each other.

Contexts of both types can reveal ideologies and structures of power that may not have been visible on the photographic print itself. For example, Edwards points to a series of pictures take in 1883 of two groups of Samoans aboard a British ship, the HMS *Mrianda* (Figures 9-10). An important part of the consideration of context, therefore, is that it deemphasizes the actual photograph as a medium for providing cultural information. Now, instead of acting as a rectangular cultural window, the photograph makes us consider and reflect out on what occurred around and outside the edges of the frame. This, as Edwards and Morton write, allows for the reading of subversive and alternative meanings into an image (Edwards & Morton 2009: 4-5). For the photograph on the *Miranda,* historical knowledge and context are crucial for understanding the relationships at play in the images. On first glance, with the Samoans sitting on the ships deck surrounded by British sailors, one might assume the Samoans have have been captured and are thus forcibly photographed. Historical context, however, provided by Edwards, illuminates the reality of the images. The two images are rather one large picture, presenting the entirety of the *Miranda*'s deck, divided in the

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middle by a naval gun. On either side are the parties of two claimants to an indigenous title of power. After fighting for some time, the two groups were summoned to the *Miranda* to work out their dispute peacefully, culminating with a large group photograph (Edwards 2001: 110-113). Rather than captives, the group of Samoans are now seen as individuals with their own history. While not fully autonomous or in control (as the colonial British saw the need to intervene in the affair), the context of the photograph removes the subjects from a position of complete submission. The meanings we impart onto the images change as we adjust our historical knowledge of the frame. In turn, questions may be raised again about the formerly theorized immutable nature of the meaning of photographs as though of through a window. Thus context, despite its seemingly solidifying nature in regards to meaning, actually opens up the photograph to many different interpretations and reflections depending on who is viewing the image and the relationships surrounding the encounter.

One of the most important aspects of dense context with regards to the photograph is that of history and memory. Photographs are often viewed by people as time and history frozen onto a piece of paper (Barthes 1980). The image, almost instantly after it is taken, takes on a great deal of historical and nostalgic meaning. The photographic image can transcend time and space, able to place the viewer so close to a past world that they can even touch it. This is partially, I believe, why the window understanding of photography (as accurate truth, a clear portal into another space) was, and continues to be, extremely popular. The photographs supposed authenticity is a powerful force, able to draw people in and begin a dialogue about what is in a photograph and why it is significant, the containing and dense contexts. This is the

reason why photographs have often been used as an anthropological method of interacting with the communities in study (Collier 1967, Payne 2016).

The view of photography as hard data, although it has mostly fallen out of favor, still crops up in certain areas of visual anthropology, demonstrates that our notion of the photograph as accurate truth has not completely gone away. John Collier and Malcom Collier Jr., in their 1986 book *Visual Anthropology,* promoted the view of photographs as nothing more than tools to gather ethnographic data. They used photography as a conversation starter with informants, helping to jog their memory and make them connect better with what the anthropologists wanted them to talk about (Collier and Collier 1967; Collier 1957). Even when used as objects of culture themselves, some writers still see the photograph as simply a means to the end of anthropological knowledge (El Guindi 2004).

However, whereas Collier saw photographs only as a tool for jogging subjects memories and gathering more concrete ethnographic data, Christopher Wright, in his work in the Solomon Islands, sees the meanings that people imbue in the photos themselves. Each photo, as well as their embedded contexts, acts as a means for people to connect back to their past and their heritage. As links to the past, photographs show much more than just what is held within the frame. When viewed by people with certain perspectives, they become mirrors that reflect back an abundance of cultural and personal knowledge. The dense context, therefore, is what people understand a photograph to mean to them within the broader realm of history, time, and space.

Often, photographic meanings and their ties to the past become so strong that the photograph comes to embody what it is representing. This is because, as Barthes

says, the photograph is "Never distinguished from its referent" (Barthes 1981: 5). The material photographic object is thus conflated with what it depicts and can seem to "come alive." Wright grapples with issues of photography and memory intimately as he argues that all too often, anthropologists do not stop to think about what photographs mean to the cultures they are studying, preferring instead to place their own ideologies and perspectives on the (metaphorically) blank paper (Wright 2004: 74). Instead, there is a wealth of meanings hidden in the memories and histories of the groups and communities these anthropologists study.

For Wright, the link between photographs and memory lies in the materiality of the image, its sensation of physical existence and manifestation. Elizabeth Edwards has also worked significantly on the photograph as a material, tangible, and sensory object, arguing that these facets of the photograph, as much as the visual component, were the cause of photography's power as a medium of memory and history (Edwards 2012). However, Wright encountered in the Solomon Islands this strong connection between photograph and referent as he was talking to people he was working with, commenting, "For Makoni (Wright's informant) the photograph is a powerful relic that retains a physical, bodily connection to his father; it partakes of his father's substance" (Wright 2004: 76). Here we see that the relationship between the viewer and the photographic image, the reflection back onto the reader's eyes, is so strong as to become equivalent to the referent, it becomes the past living again in the present. The strength of this connection opens up the photographic mirror and the viewer to further historical and memory based reflections. For example, Wright talks about how different groups and categories of people responded to a series of images he casually passed around.

Whereas the younger men dismissed the photographs as antiques, the older people in the crowd used the photographs to talk about and almost even relive the violent history of colonialism and missionary work in the Solomons, especially in reference to the arrival of the *HMS Royalist* and the darkness surrounding that occurrence (Wright 2013: 163-189). The photographs in this situation evoked, however indirectly, the historical memory of the time period of the image, providing a deeper context for the photograph and its significance to the community and its history.

For Carmen Ortiz, working in a post-9/11 terrorism filled world, photographs served as similarly evocative and powerful markers of remembrance, becoming pieces of memorials commemorating victims of the bombings in Madrid on March 11, 2004 and the 2001 attacks in New York. Ortiz, like Wright, sees photographs as objects of memory and identification. In traumatic times, such as terror attacks, the photograph becomes a way for people to capture and save the memory of the events, and, eventually, to soothe for the survivors the pain of losing loved ones (Ortiz 2013). In one image, a picture of a man facing a mirror has the caption, "Look at yourself. It might have been you" (Ortiz 2013: 66). Here we see the photographic mirror at work in a very explicit manner. The photograph and caption asks the reader to reflect on the emotional and historical contexts, the pain and suffering of the attacks, the fear of the victims, and then to put themselves into the scenario, creating a memorialized sense of empathy. The reflection the photograph forces us to comprehend works to create and build memories that can later be unleashed by further exposure to the rawness of the historical photograph.

From these examples we see that the paradigm of the photograph as a mirror complicates matters of truth, reality, perspective, and the relationship of the camera to the scene in front of it. By looking beyond what Barthes calls the *studium* of the photograph, what it is that is depicted in the image, we may see the *punctum* (Barthes 1980), which I consider to be the reflections the photograph displays beyond its borders, outside of the frame and surrounding its material being. The meaning of the photograph comes from the context created around it, which can take the form of the memory, history, or an acknowledgment of the dynamics at play in the production of a photograph, which we as the viewer bring to our reading of the image to give it a sense of value. This differs from the vision held in the first chapter, that of the photograph as a crystal clear window into another world. To get a good understanding of the differences between the two approaches, it will be beneficial to quickly reanalyze two of the photographic case studies from the first chapter through a more mirror-like lens, involving the addition of context outside the frame as well as an examination of the relationship between photographer and subject. This reanalysis of the work of E.H. Man and Huxley and Lamprey will hopefully illuminate how these images hold symbols of the ideologies of their creations within them and also show how the two approaches (window vs. mirror) reveal different aspects or ideologies of the photographic works in question.

With the case of E.H. Man, some amount of contextual information is needed to understand where his photographs came from and what perspective his images are informed by. From there we can better understand his intentions as a result of a theoretical moment or time period in the relationship between anthropology and

photography. Man was working in the Andaman Islands while the area was undergoing the imposing and destructive process of British colonialization. Part of the workings of British policy involved the understanding of the native cultures in order to better appeal to their "nature" and envelop them into the colonial fold. The Andamanese were thus seen by anthropologists, following theories of evolutionism, as "A pure, un-contacted race, living in very primitive conditions with very primitive beliefs" (Edwards 1992: 109) and as the, "Childhood of mankind" (Flowers 1880 in Edwards 1992). Furthermore, the British constructed a mythos of "savagery" around the native population, only reinforcing the need for the British to bring them to civilization (Edwards 2009). Adding onto this sense of vulnerability and subordination was the fact that colonialism was quickly killing off the native Andamanese population, scrambling anthropologists to record as much as they could to "salvage" the native culture. The Andamanese were thus the ideal subjects for British colonially influenced anthropology, and photography stepped in as the perfect medium of documentation and cultural salvage (Edwards 2009).

This is where Man steps into the frame. By the time he came to the Andaman Islands in 1869, the colonial process was well underway. By 1875-1876, when he became the head of the Andaman Homes, houses designed to provide kind and luxurious treatment to natives in order to "tame" them, Man had developed a method of anthropological inquiry based, as stated above, on the book method book *Notes and Queries* (Edwards 1992: 109). Reassessing Figure 2, which we used in the first chapter, through this lens and with this new context, we see some of Man and contemporary anthropology's ideologies shining on the viewer. This is only possible because we as the viewers have been provided the extra context, the information outside of the frame

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which we may then input into our understanding and reflections of the photograph. Figure 2, a Man photograph depicting a multitude of simultaneous cultural acts, illustrates the differences in reading with the addition of context external to the frame. At first glance, without any prior knowledge of Man or the ideas of his time, this image seems to accurately depict a natural, daily scene in Andamanese culture. Man's caption, 'Andamanese Shooting, Dancing, Sleeping, and Greeting,' only points further at the supposed accuracy and realness of the scene.

However, if we view the image not as an accurate depiction of what was in front of the camera, but as a mirror reflecting what we know about Man and the Andaman Islands, our reading changes. The image, 'Andamanese Shooting, Dancing, Sleeping, and Greeting' is not at all a natural depiction of Andaman daily life. Instead, as Edwards points out, "Every item described in this photograph can be traced back to *Notes & Queries*" (Edwards 2009: 73). The heavily posed image is therefore a representation of the assumptions and perspectives in use during anthropological photography at the time. By making each figure in the image a direct response to specific question found in *Notes and Queries,* Man uses the photograph as a hyper-efficient source of documentation and salvage, assuming he can cram in as much information as possible into each image. This is based off the ideology of the time that the photograph was equivalent to the eye, seeing the truth in front of it always. Through a mirror reading of this image, we are also able to reflect what we know about Man himself onto our viewing, seeing the photo he took as an almost autobiographical image. It is established that Man was meticulous in his documentation and adherence to established anthropological methods. However, through this piece we see Man's somewhat

paternalistic and domineering relationship with his subjects (Edwards 2009). He was

quite possessive of them and used his control and position of authority to create images

that could be used for the salvage and eventual salvation of the Andamanese. This

raises issues and questions about relationships and dynamics within a colonial space.

The Andamanese in the photograph are distinctly posed, operating in an

environment fully controlled by the photographer. Despite entering into this space of

objectification, I believe Azoulay's civil contract of photography has some uses in

understanding this photographic relationship. Azoulay's contract rests upon the principle

that, "The governed possess a certain power to suspend the gesture of the sovereign

power seeking to totally dominate relations…" (Azoulay 2008: 23). Thus we cannot say

that the Andamanese in the photograph had no power to represent themselves. Despite

Man's attempts to gather objective data through the assumed truth of the camera, the

Andamanese subjects were able to depict, through their own body positions and poses,

their identity and positions as humans on an equal level to that of the photographer. The

punctum that drove this point home for me is the depiction, on the right side of the

image, of "greeting." As Barthes writes, the *punctum* cannot be consciously created by

the photographer, it comes about by some other means (Barthes 1980: 42). The source

of this *punctum* must then be the people engaging in the act itself, the two people

greeting. This part of the scene looks less posed and more emotional, provoking a

sense of resistance to the overall oppressive relationship of the photograph. Only

through a reanalysis of this image with a focus on the mirror, or what the context and

relationship of the photograph reflect back on the viewer, can we begin to see the

resistance to colonialism that would otherwise go unnoticed.

The second case study that we will analyze is that of Thomas Henry Huxley and John Lamprey. These two men developed and attempted to standardize methods of anthropometric photography and study. By looking at images made with this methodology through a photographic window lens, we were able to see the assumptions made during the time about the effectiveness of photography at capturing reality and body measurement data. In this reanalysis, the focus will be on how these images and the processes of their creation worked within larger theories of human and social evolution and how the images contributed to ideologies of cultural and biological superiority through the measurement of the human body.

One of the concerns of anthropology in the 19th century was that of typology, or classifying and distinguishing racial "types." Building off of a taxonomy of humans developed by Linnaeus in 1735, this practice developed primarily from Darwin's theory of evolution as it was subsequently applied to questions of human society, leading to the term "Social Darwinism" (Gould 1981). Using the work of Tylor (1871), Morgan (1877) and Spencer (1860), by the later half of the 19th century this typology had become a sophisticated racial hierarchy, with white Anglo Saxons at the pinnacle and other races sitting below them as those of lesser intelligence, biological fitness, and cultural and technological sophistication. For theorists of the time, cultural evolution and biological evolution were two sides of the same coin (Haller 1971). Anthropology, more specifically ethnology, or the comparison of characteristics between groups, was eager to help prove the biological and cultural superiority of Euro-Americans over other groups.

Photography offered the perfect medium to show scientific evidence of the differences between different racial types. While earlier methods of documenting racial

types, such as drawings and paintings, proved popular and influential (Cowling 1989), the photograph was unmatched in its supposed accuracy, as the light from a scene was directly reflected onto the photographic film. The photograph was thus perfect for providing the documentation needed by the science of ethnology in order to reinforce the racially hierarchical paradigms of the time (Ryan 1997: 148). Thus the "science" of anthropometry, the measurement of the human body, became intertwined with the politics of racial typological photography (Maxwell 2008).

Early typological photographs lacked a definitive system for capturing anthropometric data, thus reducing their reliability when exposed to the trials of hard science (Maxwell 2008: 21). Travelers and colonial administrators took many "racial type" photographs that, while lacking in scientific rigor, were still seen as providing baselines by which theorists could compare groups and rank their progress through social evolution (Ryan 1997). In response to this variability and lack of accuracy, Huxley and Lamprey created systems to standardize anthropometric photography in order that they would better serve their purpose as data. The usage of blank decontextualized backdrops in these photographs is emblematic of the significance of these images, presenting depictions of "lesser" racial types removed from any social context, thus allowing contemporary viewers to focus on the morphological differences between groups and the social evolutionary hierarchy that results from such differences. Most often, these differences were used to further the causes of colonialism as a method of civilization, raising up "lesser savages" to a level of cultural sophistication (Maxwell 2008).

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Anthropometric photography, therefore, was a tool used to reinforce contemporary notions of racial and cultural superiority. Whereas the window method of analysis showed us how such photographs were examples of the idea that the camera captured exactly what was in front of it, preserving sizes, ratios and data for later analysis, and focused on the photograph as material data, the mirror approach illuminates alternative meanings for these types on images. With the contextual background knowledge of social Darwinism and racial taxonomies, the frame of our viewing is expanded beyond just what we see in the image in front of us. Each anthropometric photograph thus becomes a symbol for the reinforcement of ideologies and practices of racism and objectification (Ryan 1997: 145, Maxwell 2008). We see focus our attention when gazing at these pictures at what may lie outside the frame, the situational context each might have been taken in and how those situations show themselves in the image. The mirror reveals ideologies in photographs that would otherwise, without theoretical and historical contextual knowledge, not be brought to the surface.

In this chapter we have gone through a second way people look at and analyze anthropological photographs. Instead of seeing a photograph as a window into the scene being captured by the camera, as it was though photography did in its early history, this more contemporary lens takes the form of a mirror, taking into account the relationship between the camera, photographer, subject, and viewer in the production of an image, the historical context surrounding the images, and the memories historical photographs hold and bring to life. All of these things reflect out from the photograph onto the viewer, expanding the frame of the photograph, complicating our readings, and

precluding any one point of view from inscribing meaning onto the blank photograph. I argue that this mirror viewpoint is the current *de facto* way scholars view anthropological photography, working as an antithesis to the earlier window view by problematizing and revealing ideologies that were previously hidden in our viewings. While the mirror analogy does an excellent job of adding layers to the meanings of photographs, I believe it could focus more on the image as a site of social gathering, as a way to express and empower one's own history. There is a good deal of contemporary authorship on these types of issues already; however, I believe they must be packaged into a new methodology for doing anthropological photography.

Chapter 4

Tables: A Social Reading of Photography

In the previous chapters, we viewed anthropological photography through two different lenses. First, there was the concept of photography as a window into a different world, a depiction of truth and physical reality. In the last chapter, I examined the shift in anthropology towards viewing photographs as mirrors, or objects that reflect back onto the viewer a host of relationships and historical contexts. Both of these theories are drawn from John Szarkwoski's introduction to the catalogue of the 1978 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art called, "Mirrors and Windows: American Photography Since 1960" (Szarkowski 1978). In this last chapter I offer up an alternative method of seeing anthropological photography: as a site of social and cultural interaction and community building, represented by the metaphor of the table. I chose the table because in this model I see the photograph as becoming the focal point for conversation and dialogue, an object for communities to gather over and discuss, bringing peoples together in a central, safe location like that of the kitchen table. This is not a completely new concept, and I will show how this concept came about as a continuation of what others have done. The concept of the photograph as a table encompassing relationships, objects, and histories will be examined through the case study of my own anthropological fieldwork in the Yucatán of Mexico. The photographic images that resulted from this project, I believe, illustrate this different method for using photography in an anthropological manner.

Using either the window or the mirror concept of anthropological photography, the project would have been focused on capturing an image and making off with it to

analyze later, in the comfort of the academy. However, with the table method grounding my work, taking photographs and analyzing them becomes a community project for preserving and creating cultural heritage. This continues the tradition of the Penn Cultural Heritage Center's overarching project in Tihosuco, which is more focused on community development and dialogue than archaeological digging or simply capturing the culture as it is in the moment (R. Leventhal et al 2014). My project uses the photograph as an object of community building, bringing people together (similar to how a table naturally gathers people around it) to discuss their history and heritage, what it means to them, and how the photographs build upon and draw out these ideas. This is not a completely new concept, as Christopher Wright exemplifies in his work in the Solomon Islands (2013). Indeed, the concept of the photograph as a table evokes allusions to the work of John and Malcom Collier, mentioned earlier in this paper. It is in the methodology of Collier that we may find the resemblance. In his 1957 article, John Collier Jr. used photographs in a "controlled experiment on the aid of photography in interviewing" (Collier 1957: 843). Collier sought to use photographs as tools to encourage conversation that would reveal anthropological data. In their book *Visual Anthropology,* the Colliers advocated for the use of photography as, "a means to an end: holistic and accurate observation..." (Collier and Collier 1967: 5). My project takes this in a different direction, seeking to make photography become a form of self representation and understanding rather than just a tool for the outsider anthropologist to make claims about another culture. In my project, like Collier's, photography encourages conversation. However, it is not for the purpose of gathering anthropological data, but rather to make the photograph a scene where communities can come together

and hold discussions about their identity, their future, and their relation to the past. This can only be accomplished by building trust with the photographs and the photographer.

This project, and the new model of anthropological photograph as a table that comes with it, drew on many theoretical inspirations from past anthropologists. The different pieces of this project (photographs, interviews, text) have been done before, but it is the combination of these ideas, along with a focus on community building and cultural heritage, that make the project a new example of photography at the table, encouraging a space for dialogue and gathering. This project is built around concepts of collaboration and community story-telling and representation, between multiple parties acting on an equal footing, instead of a disequilibrium of power imposed by the photographer (Edwards 2001, Azoulay 2008, Behar 1996). This view of anthropological photography reflects on earlier photographic practices. Instead of having the photographer/anthropologist in charge of the process of photographing and recording events, later thinking emphasizes the collaborative and dialectical nature of photography. I focused my work on this later line of thinking, of giving the power of representation to the people who are telling their own story. This meant that in every scenario where there were portraits of people being taken, the person in the photograph was in complete control of how they were depicted, from the background location, down to the lighting and the clothes they were wearing. This allowed the power of representation to return to those that were being depicted, the cultural insiders, rather than it lying outside of their control. I believe that this shifting of control over the photographic image is where my project differs from those done in the past. It provides a different context through which we view these images (Edwards 2001), one that

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hopefully provides more clarity and reality of what the people in the photographs believe and care about. This adjustment to the traditional relationships within the production of photography (Azoulay 2008) allow for those people in this project to more freely discuss and create their own meanings for the images. Such a shift in authorship repositions the anthropologist/photographer as a collaborator, rather than a dictator, of meaning (MacDougall 1998: 150-164).

One of the largest and most important recent shifts in visual anthropology has been the acknowledgment that the camera is a powerful tool of representation, creating images that often exceed the contextual boundaries of meaning we place on them in exhibition. This, in many cases, can create a sometimes dangerous difference of power between those holding the camera (the anthropologist) and those in front of the lens (Sontag 1973). In the window model of anthropological photography, there is not much thought given to the viewpoints and knowledge of the subjects, the people in the photograph. They exist as bodies to be gazed at. However, this paradigm left out what is now a crucial and fundamental concept in modern anthropology: cultural relativism. While photographs naturally have many meanings (more on this later), by leaving out the voices and opinions of the subjects of photographs, certain meanings are lost and shut off, never to see the light of day. This issue of ethnocentrism has been recognized and there are now many visual anthropology projects involving collaboration and dialogue between the anthropologist and those they are working with. Such projects are grounded in a leveling of the field in the relationship between photographer/ anthropologists and those they study and take pictures of/with.

The idea of collaboration is critically important for Ariella Azoulay in her book, *The Civil Contract of Photography.* Azoulay imagines photography as a space of mutual understanding and consent, guided by a universal social contract. This contract lays out the rights of all participants in the photographic process, giving a large amount of rights and powers to the photographed person. In turn, the social contract of photography enrolls all participants in photography (photographer, subject, spectators) into the utopian ideal of the "citizenry of photography" (Azoulay 2008: 97). I do not believe in Azoulay's utopian ideal of the "citizenry of photography" as a collective egalitarian state. This portion of her argument stretches too far and attempts to imbue photography with the grand power of state building, and while I believe photography has great power to form and shape identity, seeing the medium as a haven for the stateless seems far fetched. Nonetheless, her idea of a civil contract creates some important implications for anthropological photography. Azoulay builds a model of photography that encompasses multiple viewpoints into the act of taking a pictures, saying "The theory of photography proposed… is founded on a new ontological-political understanding of photography. It takes into account all the participants in photographic acts—- camera, photographer, photographed subject, and spectator—approaching the photograph (and its meanings) as an unintentional effect of the encounter between all of these" (Azoulay 2008, 23). These relationships operate outside of the normal state structures of power and representation, allowing for a dialectical process of reimagining the identity of the photograph and those surrounding it. Azoulay thus sees the civil contract of photography as the rule of law within photographic spaces, serving to ensure that

everybody fulfills their role and that the photographed subject is empowered by the image making process (Azoulay 2008, 85-136).

Azoulay's belief that photography is truly a collaborative process, where each participant (subject, photographer, audience member) plays an equally important role and has equal control over the final product, raises questions about what ideologies and understandings of truth are being represented in a photograph. For Azoulay, the production of realities within the photograph provides an alternative to the institutional truths of citizenry created by nation states (Azoulay 2008, 18), thus allowing for "the citizenry of photography" to make a place for displaced people to represent themselves and their ideologies. However, this multiplicity of meanings and viewpoints in a photograph becomes complicated when differences of power between actors is taken into account. Azoulay's studies of Israeli photographs of Palestinians in the later half of the 20th century reveal a tangled web of voices, power, and representation. Azoulay sees in these situations her idea of the civil contract of photography mediating the encounter between the camera, the photographer, and the subject. While the photographer comes from a position of power and the image is embedded with the ideologies of that position, the photographic contract is able to carve out a space for dialogue and the viewpoint of the subject (Azoulay 2008, 393), reflecting to the viewer a negotiated contested meaning. In photography, no voice or viewpoint is completely dominant and therefore, no single truth or reality takes precedent.

David McDougall adds to the discussion surrounding photography, film, and representing voice. In his chapter "Whose Story is it?" in his book *Transcultural Cinema,* McDougall says that visual anthropologists are becoming more aware of this balance of

voice and ideology. They are making texts that further incorporate indigenous viewpoints into the work (McDougall 1998, 153-154). This furthers the understanding that Azoulay posits that photographs are not just vehicles of one ideological reality but rather integrate numerous truths into them from the various viewpoints involved in image production and photographic storytelling. As McDougall says, we must, "Acknowledge the maker (photographer) as but one aspect of its coming into being" (McDougall 1998, 158). McDougall and Azoulay agree then, that when considering the photograph as a cultural object capable of reflecting and transmitting meaning, there are more viewpoints at work than just the photographer's. The photographic mirror is a more expansive and inclusive understanding of photography which incorporates multiple viewpoints to complicate the ideologies reflected out of the image.

In forming the table analogy for anthropology, I am partially rejecting the window and mirror methods as insufficient and instead am aligning myself more with Azoulay with what I am trying to do with my project. Instead of capturing reality or the external truth through the camera or subsequent photographic analysis, my project focuses on photography as a medium for storytelling and sharing. The telling of stories allows for greater empathy and understanding between the anthropologist, the culture they are working with, and the viewers/readers of those stories (Behar 1996). To the end of storytelling, I do not believe that photographs can adequately display and portray the entirety of a scene or its surrounding contexts. The frame must end somewhere, and despite the seemingly perfect replication of reality, the photograph is not reality (Barthes 1980). The photograph by itself is unable to express the spectrum of emotions, politics,

and histories of the people it is representing (Edwards 2001). Thus, a major portion of my project is attempting to supplement the photograph with other means of storytelling in order to build a more cohesive understanding of what the people of Tihosuco are feeling and thinking about their heritage and the Caste War past.

To do this, each portrait of a Maya individual is accompanied by a transcript excerpt of the interview we conducted with them. Similarly to how historical context can expand the frame of the photo to incorporate actors and places not depicted in the image, the addition of text to the photograph adds an additional layer of focus and clarity to the meanings that the Maya see in the images. The inspiration for this textual expansion of the frame derives partially from the common use of captioning photographs of other cultures in publication such as *National Geographic.* As Lutz and Collins argue (1993: 76-81, 217-258), the caption guides the reader/viewer towards a specific reading of the photograph. When left without this additional contextual information, the viewer wanders through the process of giving an image meaning, always strongly informed by the larger cultural systems that they are a part of. In the case of *National Geographic,* however, the captions reinforced the exoticism and eroticization of foreign cultures to a primarily middle class American audience (Lutz & Collins 1993: 76-81).

In my project, the text (too long to be called a 'caption') derives not from the cultural outsiders (the magazine writers) or even from the anthropologist themselves (as in the case of Malinowski [Young 1998]), but rather from those who have the best understanding of their own heritage and culture. By having the text originate from the subject of the photo, it serves to help narrow down the meanings that can be seen in the

image, focusing the viewer on what the Maya people want them to see, the message they want people to take away from their image. Additionally, it furthers the table model, by encouraging dialogue and discussion around the photographs, what each person had to say, and how it varies or agrees with other ideas (Wright 2013, MacDougall 1998). The text helps the image tell a clear story of what the Maya in Tihosuco believe about their past and their heritage. It allows for groups like the Maya to represent themselves to an audience that would otherwise never hear or see their stories (Appadurai 2013, Azoulay 2008, De Lorenzo & Gemes 2016, De Cuyper 1997, Marion 2010). While there have been other attempts to bring wider attention to the issues surrounding Maya cultural heritage in Mexico, such as musical acts like the Tiho Rappers or community run projects intended to build up tourism infrastructure, the photographic image, in conjunction with the text, provides an easily widespread body of stories that can be understood by everybody thanks to the perceived universality of the photographic image. Thus, the addition of text to the portraits of the people of Tihoscuo serves multiple critical functions and helps the project move away from a reliance on the visual image as the sole conveyor of meaning and message.

The last portion of the project that I believe makes it stand out from previous works is the manner in which the final images were displayed and incorporated into the community. Rather than seeing the photos as belonging to me the photographer, as has been the case throughout the history of photography, this project views the resulting images as belonging to the community members themselves. In this way, the project and the images become themselves part of the cultural heritage and memory of the people of Tihoscuo. After we were done compiling the images and the text, we went

back to each person and gave them a copy of their picture, along with a picture of their family which we also took. This was in some ways our payment, our thank you gift to those that shared their stories with us. By returning with copies of the photos, the project demonstrated commitment to working in collaboration with the community, instead of just taking photos as case studies or visual cultural data (Pink 2007). Additionally, the last week of the project, when we were displaying our images, fell during the annual anniversary celebration of the beginning of the Caste War. This is a very large, week long event encompassing plays, music, games, awards, and reenactments (Figure 11). As part of the celebrations, the large printings of the photographs were hung in the local Caste War Museum, one of the hubs of community activity in town (Figure 12). Community reactions to the exhibition were positive, and many people viewed the images and discussed them with each other at the museum. Unlike anthropological photographs in previous models, where the image was intended for a Western academic audience (Edwards 1992), by displaying the images within the community first, in a space that the Maya have control over, we are further integrating the project into the town and its history. This helps jumpstart discussions over the photographs, furthering the table metaphor as one that is inclusive and focused on the community in which anthropological photography is being done.

After the exhibition was over, we went back to each person in the photographs again and gave them the large version of their photo, complete with the text attached. Similar to a 2001 "visual repatriation" project done by the Pitt Rivers Museum, returning the photographs to the people provides them with the continuing opportunity to create further indigenous meanings and histories out of the images (Morton & Edwards 2009:

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265-280). In that project, anthropometric photographs borne from, "outsider, scholarly, anthropological modes of thought…" (Morton & Edwards 2009: 266), were brought back to the Native American community they were sourced from, without the captions placed on them by their Western academic creators. A similar process occurs in this project, although with a few differences. Rather than forming entirely new indigenous readings of rediscovered photographs by "returning" (for they never really left) the images and texts to the community members, they are able to add additional layers of meaning through their personal relations to the photograph. In many discussions we had with people as we were returning their photos, they told us that they were either going to hang the images in prominent places in their houses or save them for the future, to show later generations what they had said in the past, about the past, as an act of preservation and construction of their identities and heritage (Morton & Edwards 2009: 269-270). The photographs themselves became incorporated into the ever-evolving heritage and history of the Maya in Tihosuco, acting as a material way of transferring cultural and historical knowledge to those in the future (Edwards 2003, 2004).

In some cases, the materiality of the photograph extends beyond the transfer of cultural knowledge. For some families, the photographs came to embody the people in the images that had died. This is not simply a symbolic connection, the photograph *represents* the person, but is a very literal and real embodiment, the photograph *is* the deceased (Barthes 1980: 76-77). The photographic object, through showing that what is in the image was once there and capturing the exact light off the person, comes to become an embodiment of that person, a continuation of their life. The Tihosuco project took place over the course of two summers, 2015 and 2016. In the first year of the

project, I took a photo of Francisca Uh Yupit (Figure 13), an 88-year old woman living on the main road of Tihosuco. I was saddened to learn when I returned the next year that she had passed during the offseason. We learned later, however, that the photo we had given to her family was used as a way of remembering her. The image then was used not only as a connection to the past, but as a way of preserving identity and familial legacy into the future.

I have described how the project in Tihosuco attempts to work under a different model of anthropological photography, one based on the analogy of the table instead of a mirror or window. The table promotes collaboration in the methodological process of producing images and creating accompanying texts with a focus on the indigenous point of view and understanding of their own heritage. The relationship of the photographer to the other people at the table shifts to be more of a facilitator or a tool of expression (Morton & Edwards 2009: 216). I believe that this shift in the power of representation, along with the addition of text to help focus the meanings of the images, allows the Maya in Tihosuco to discuss and portray their heritage and relationship to the Caste War as they themselves see it. In a sense, what I have tried to do with this project is remove as many barriers as possible between the viewer of the images and the meanings the Maya want to imbue on them. In this process I think the project has been successful. However, reflection on this project raises for me a few issues in the methodology that I would like to address in future iterations.

The biggest issue revolved around the use of language in the project, an unavoidable issue when using text. This problem was two-fold. The first issue is that I, as the lead anthropologist and photographer, do not speak the local languages of the

communities I am working in, Yucatec Maya and Spanish. While my Spanish is mediocre to the point where conversation is difficult and understanding stories impossible, I have absolutely no experience speaking Maya. This facilitated the need for multiple translations in order to run something like a portrait shoot or an interview, not an ideal situation for performing functions of representation and storytelling. Without being able to speak the languages used in the community, it becomes hard to participate in a meaningful way and to build further interpersonal trust with community members. While this was resolved partially by the use of translators and hand signals, I hope in the future to be able to bridge the language gap between the anthropologist and the Maya people.

The second language issue also stems from issues of translation. The narratives that accompany the portraits were printed in the language that they were told to us in. If they were spoken in Maya, they were transcribed into Maya, the same with Spanish. This works well when presenting the images to those within the community. However, part of this project is having these stories shown to those outside of the Maya community. Thus there is a language barrier between the stories in the photos and the viewers of the images. One of the possibilities for handling this gap is a translation from the indigenous language to whatever language the viewers speak (in this case English). While this may solve the issue in the short term, it raises questions of authenticity. How accurate are the words on the page after they have been translated into a totally different language? In this case we must assume that translation dilutes the meanings of the stories being told. Thus, when these narratives are presented in English, they are not presented as truthfully as they would otherwise be. Language acts as a fog on the

photographic window, one of the downsides of combining the universal language of the image with the non-universal languages spoken in different areas.

The discussion of translation should not be contained just to the written text. It must be expanded to include languages and grammars of photography, as photography, as elucidated in the third chapter, is always seen differently depending on your cultural context. The question arises then, do the Maya of Tihosuco see photography through the same framework of understanding? Is it seen as the dialogic object I theorized it as? Or is there some other way that the town understands these photographs that I did not get at in my fieldwork? The answer, truthfully, is that I do not know. There is a sense of uncertainty surrounding these different understandings. It is something I hope to get at more in my continuations of this project. However, my anecdotal experiences from the field may provide some loose and understandably preliminary analysis of these frameworks of knowledge. As stated above, the reaction to these images when displayed was very positive, and people said they really enjoyed reading what people had to say in addition to looking at the images. Additionally, while I was in the field this summer working on my images, I was also doing side work for another component of the Penn CHC project, one relating to older historical photographs. My job was to take old family photographs from people in town, scan them, and then edit out all of the damage they had sustained over the years, such as holes, fading, and lens spots from the original camera. The people who wanted these photographs fixed felt very close to the images and they wanted to keep them for longer which is why I was helping to preserve them. To the people in the town, the images were often the only pictures they had of their deceased relatives, relating back to Wright (2013) and his analysis of the

personification of photographs, the way they hold onto the essence of the person they depict. These anecdotes lead me to tentatively believe that the Maya framework for understanding photographs is not that far removed from the way I see them as the anthropologist. However, this issue need to be investigated further, as I am bound by my own perspectives and privileges as a White American male cultural outsider, holding a powerful tool of representation.

The last issue with the methodology raises larger question about the ability of an outsider to represent another culture through the production of images in any way. As Jay Ruby suggests in his book *Picturing Culture,* "Even with cooperatively produced films [photographs in this case], the moral burden of authorship still resides with the filmmaker[/photographer]" (Ruby 2000: 207). That is to ask: are the perspectives and the voices within the project coming through clearly as those of the Maya themselves? Or is the project, despite the best efforts to reduce my role in identity and image creation, still an outsider's perspective? By simply making my job to press a shutter button, I had hoped that the resulting photographs would capture the Maya as they wanted themselves to be seen. This was my attempt at "speaking with" the Maya around a table, instead of "speaking for" them through the view of a window or mirror (Ruby 2000: 204). However, because I was the one controlling the actual means of image production, the camera, Ruby might say that the process was not entirely collaborative, but rather a clever illusion (Ruby 2000: 208). I would like to think that the Tihosuco project was in general a very collaborative effort, as it helped community members think about and discuss their heritage, and the relationship between the contemporary Maya and their Caste War descendants.

On the other side though, Ruby raises a critical issue in visual anthropology, and that is that of the role of the anthropologist/photographer in the production of visual culture. Although the basis of the project allowed for the people in the photographs to better represent themselves, it is impossible to circumvent the fact that I as the photographer/anthropologist wield immense power in how the Maya of Tihoscuo are depicted. Not only does this relate to my privileged identity, but it also opens up questions of art and aesthetics in anthropology. Part of my approach to taking and editing the photographs was informed by the aesthetic frameworks used by Western photographic arts, this is inescapable (MacDougall 1998). I am bound by my own aesthetic vision as a photographer and an artist in the Western tradition. At an extreme end of the spectrum, although one all too commonly seen when viewing photography of foreign cultures, the photographer lets their aesthetic vision take over the image, prioritizing beauty and the exoticizing gaze over realistic depictions of other people and communities. On the other extreme however, media productions run exclusively within indigenous communities, while holding immense possibilities for providing voices that are not often heard in films and photographs, also carry some of their own risks. The major one that I see is that of wider comprehensibility, or the idea that media texts produced exclusively within a culture will not be understandable to those outside it (Ruby 2000: 218). While this may not always be a problem, as in the case where texts are not designed to leave indigenous communities, in the Tihosuco project, this would present some issues. Not only are the images supposed to be used within the town to help build heritage and history, but they are also meant to be displayed outside the town, to bring attention to the issues facing the contemporary Maya, the threats they

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see to their heritage. If these images were produced insularly within the community, they would not hold enough context or logic to outsiders, even through they make perfect sense to those within the culture. Thus there is a balancing act, a third perspective formed from an amalgam of the anthropologist and the indigenous "subject" (although that term carries issues of objectification itself). I believe that both the viewpoint of the outsider and the insider are necessary to gather a more complete understanding of a situation or a cultural issue, and the balance struck in the Tihosuco project seems to fit into this alternative amalgamation of viewpoints.

In this last chapter I have detailed the table model of anthropological photography and the case study used to describe it, my own photography project of the contemporary Maya people living in the small town of Tihoscuo on the Yucatán peninsula. Rather than see the photograph as mirrors or windows serving as objects to be viewed, the table places the image in the role of facilitators of discourse, acting to foster collaboration and context in the creation of meanings attached to photographs. The methodology used in the project helps clarify the table analogy by providing the power of representation to the Maya people themselves, allowing them to then come to the discussion table with an understanding of how they want to see themselves and their relationship to the past. This relates to questions of authorship, the limitation of the photograph to focus different readings, and the production of identity and remembering history. Although these issues may not be fully solved, the project, in dialogue with earlier writers, begins to make strides towards an anthropological photography that strives to accurately depict not what scene is in front of the camera, but the thoughts

and feelings behind each portrait, allowing us to build empathy and understanding with the images we view (Behar 1996).

Photography and anthropology continue to have a complicated and sometimes tense relationship. Despite existing for quite a long time, the use of visual images (whether film or still photography) is still viewed with skepticism by many within anthropology. However, I believe that the visual image has an enormous amount of potential for improving anthropological fieldwork and study. To unlock this potential, it is necessary to accept that photography has not been fully explored as a medium, there are many creative ways to use photography to bring a sense of closeness and empathy to ethnographic accounts and similar anthropological endeavors.

The three methods I have discussed in this paper are all limited in how they view photography in relation to anthropology. None of them can be claimed as a universally accepted understanding, and all are open to adaptation. My own table analogy was born out of what I see as gaps within the mirror style methods of study. Such analyses were focused primarily on the image itself, whether as a cultural object or as a marker referring back to an different time. Despite the understanding that images have no meaning themselves and are reliant on humans to imbue them with meanings drawn from their own culture and contexts, the mirror analysis lacks a focus on the people and cultures surrounding a photograph during the process of meaning creation. The table analogy is thus meant to evoke a gathering of individuals around a common object, the photograph in this case. However, the table (photograph) is not the focus of the event, it is merely a tool used, much like Collier's (1957), to encourage discussion and debate over identity, culture, and ownership of the past. Rather, the focus is on the community

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surrounding the image, as they are the ones that focus in on the meanings they want to read into the images. This is where the use of text comes into play, as I do not believe that images themselves can tell a whole story. They are too vulnerable to misinterpretation, which I believe is where much of the anxiety over their use stems from. The use of text as a focuser of meaning helps reduce these fears, as the people in the image have greater say over how viewers of their pictures will read them. In the future, other alternative ways to use photography will arise, possibly melding with other forms of media to create even more in depth experiences of culture and understanding.

Still, as said above, no structure of viewing anthropological photography is complete. We must be creative with our uses of images, looking towards the past to see what worked, what didn't, and what could be tweaked in the future to create different forms of knowledge. This reflexiveness has been a defining aspect of anthropology for many generations, and I hope that continuously rethinking our engagement with images will allow them to become accepted as powerful and vital units of knowledge and identity, if not necessarily truth. The future of anthropological photography will be as long and complicated as its past.

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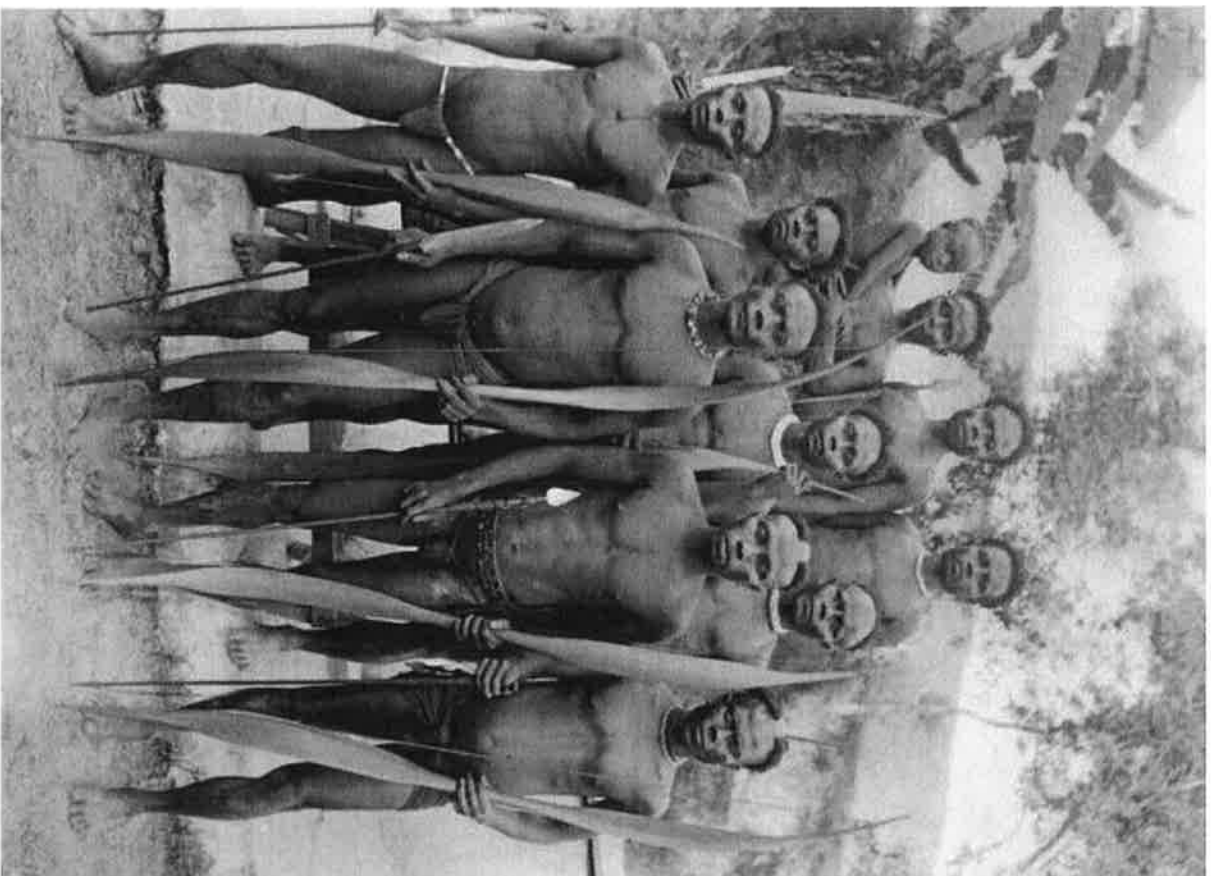
Figure 1

E.H Man 1901.
Pitt Rivers Museum 1998.230.1.3

Figure 2

E.H. Man 1880.
RAI Library.

67 Andamanese Shooting, Dancing, Sleeping and Greeting', c. 1880. Photograph by E.H. Man. (RAI Library Collection, Museum of Mankind)

Figure 3 | E.H. Man c1878.
Pitt Rivers Museum 1998.230.5.5
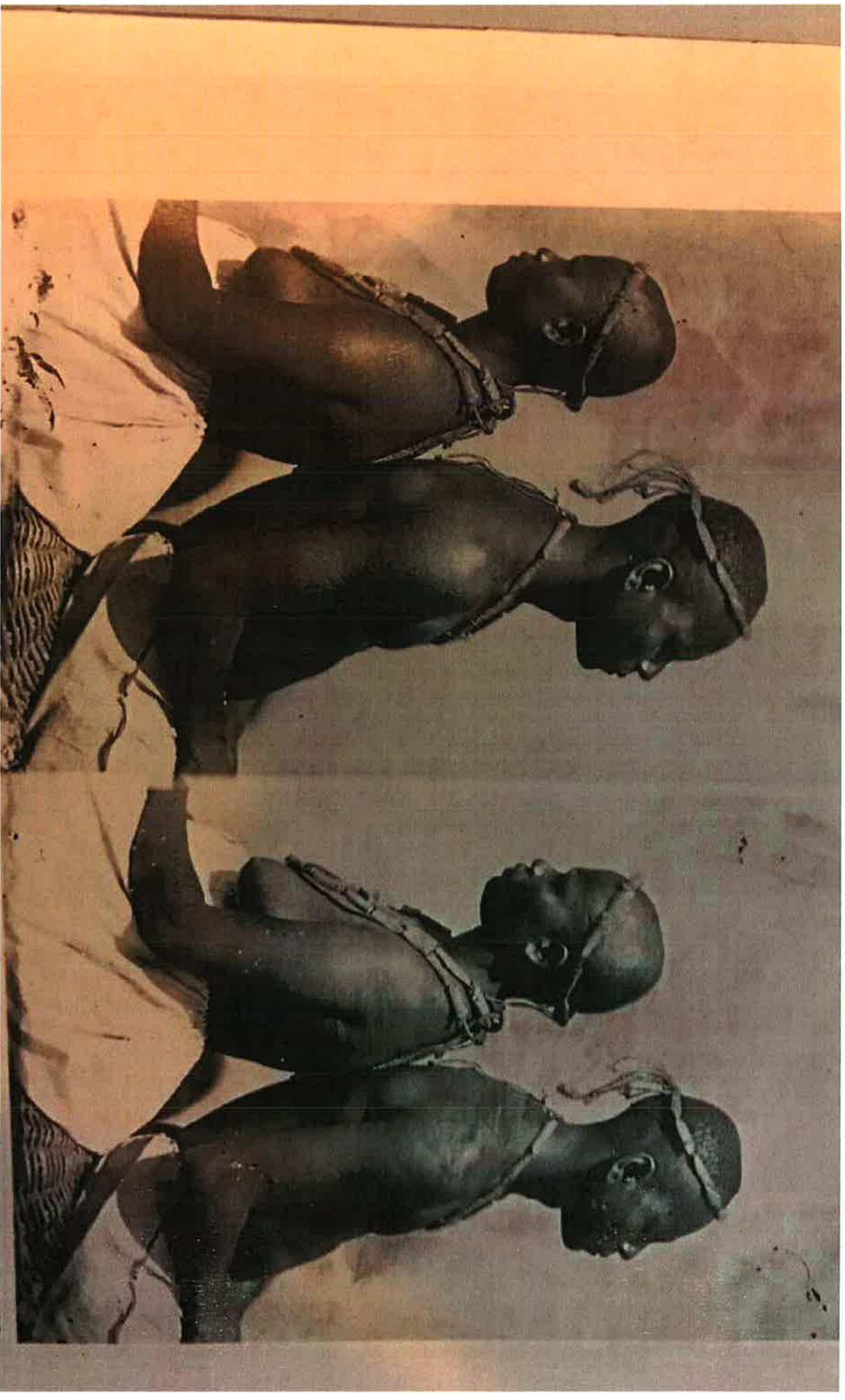
Figure 4

E.H. Man 1880.
RAI 34463
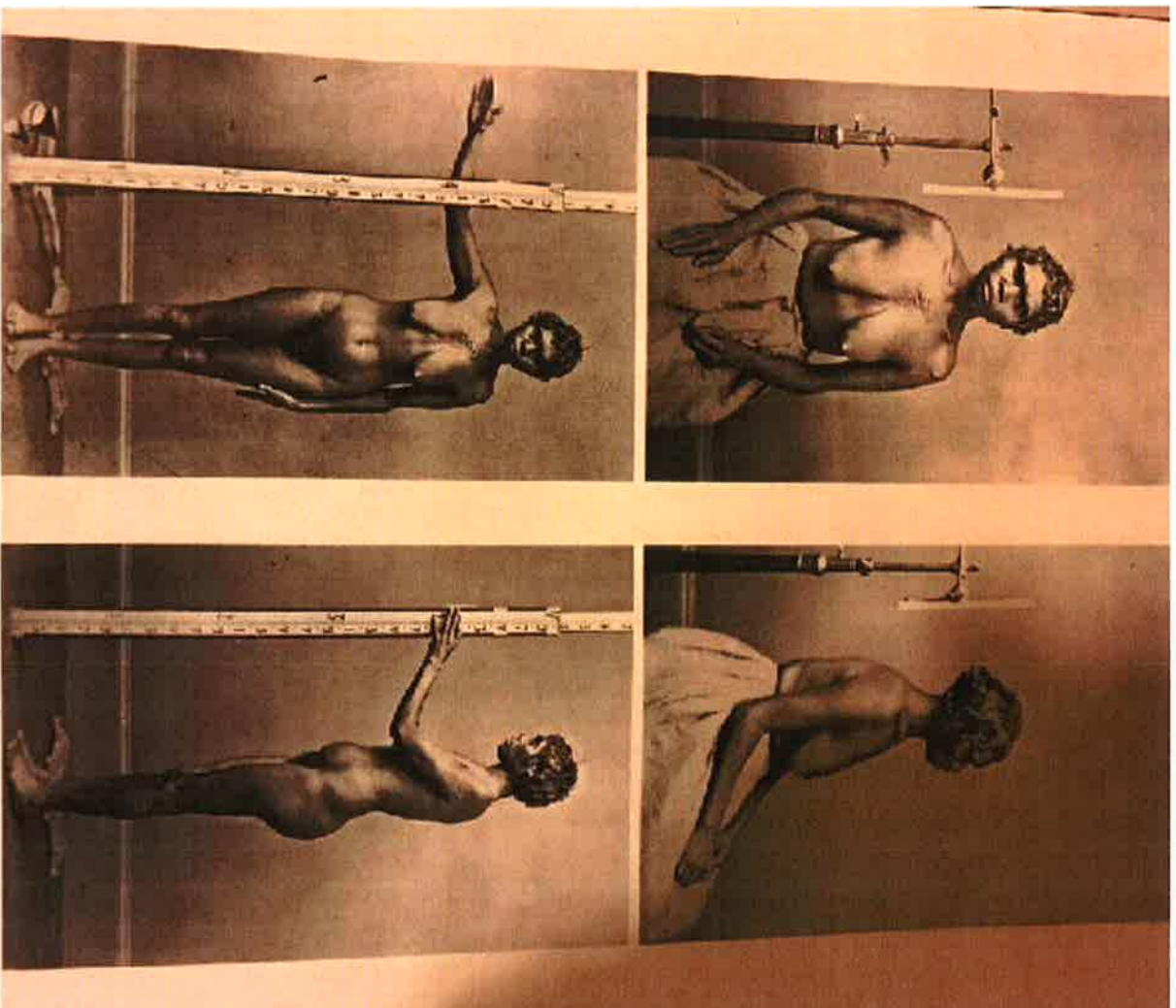
Figure 5

Unknown Photographer c1870.
British Museum

Figure 6

Figure 7

Everard im Thurn 1883-84.
RAI 639

Figure 8

Everard im Thurn 1889-90.
RAI 610

Figure 9

Captain W.A.D Acland 1883.
Pitt Rivers Museum 1998.236.10.1

Figure 10

Captain W.A.D Acland 1883.
Pitt Rivers Museum 1998.236.10.2

Figure 11   Drew R. Leventhal 2016.
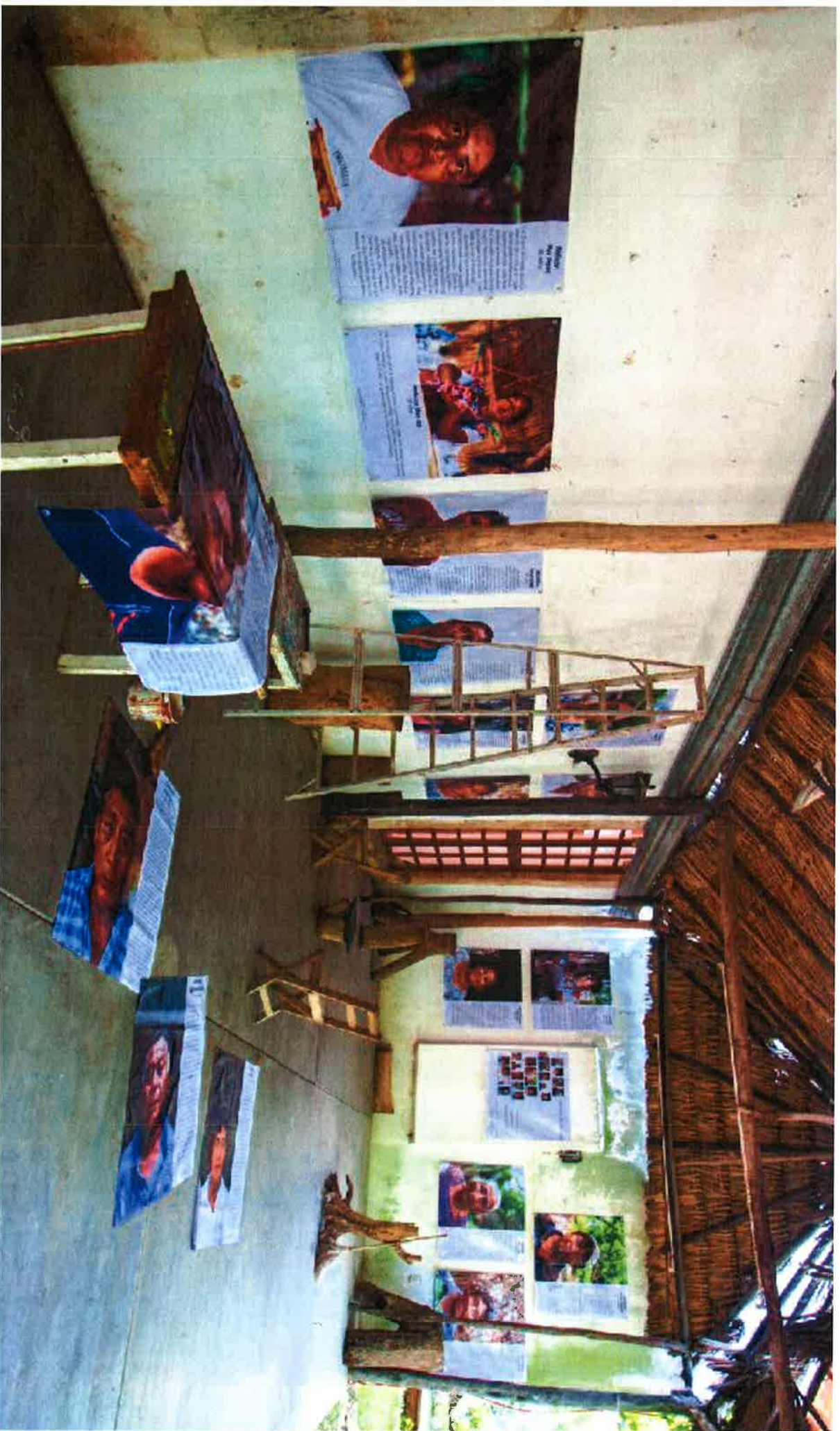
Figure 12 | Drew R. Leventhal 2016

Figure 13 | Drew R. Leventhal 2015

Francisca Uh Yi,pii:, 88: Nosotros somos y&imos aqui.
Mis papas me trajeron acui cuando era pequeña.

Retratos de Tihosuco

Drew Leventhal

Kasey Diserens

Marcelina Chan Canche

Malaquías
Puc Puc
47 años

Taak te' tiempo bejla'e' wáa tumen yaan máax invadirtik ak lu'ume' to'one' yaan ak tratartik in defendertik tumen way ch'ijo'one' tumen ak lu'um, yaan to'on u derecheoil in ba'ateltik, to'on maaya'one' yaan ak ts'áaik ak k'i'ik'el yo'olal ak lu'um, yo'olal ak futuro ak paalal yéetel u futuro ak generacioneso'ob.

Pues tene' kin túukultike' le ba'atel úucho' uts, tumen wáa ma' u yúuchule' mix táan u yantal ak libertad, ti'al ak meyaj, libertad ti'al ak maan, u tsikbal máak yéetel u yéet wíiniki' tumen ka' ach úuchile' letï'ob ku adueñartik, letï'ob ku disponer yéetel a orarios, mix táan u béeytal a beetik je'el ba'ax a k'áate' ta ora teche' sino, lekéen u ya'alo'obo' letï' kun úuchul yo'olal túune' yanchaj u beetiko'ob le movimientoso'obo', bey úuchik u yantal le ba'atelo', tumen wáaj ma'e' u yúuchule' mix táan u yantal ak libertad.

José Juan
Puc Díaz
19 años

In consejoe' ti' le táankelen paalalo'obo' eske ma' u p'áatko'ob le kaaja' tumen wáa jee uts, ya'ab ba'al k'a'ana'an in k'aj óoltiko'on te' kaaj ma' ak óojela' jach ya'ab istorias, ya'ab ba'al úuchuj waye' tumen ts'o'ok u káajal u tu'ubul tumen jk'uch le tecnología maas túumbentako'obo', le celulareso'obo', le computadoraso'obo', yo'olal le je'elo' leti' ocasionartik u tu'ubul le úuchben creencias ak óojelo', ak úuchben costumbres p'áata'an to'ono' tumen le úuchben le maayaso'obo'.

Ku ch'a'ajo'olto'ob u ts'áaikuba'ob u permanentei' le creensiaso'obo' wáaj le costumbreso', le úuchben t'aan p'áata'an to'ono'. Tene' kin t'anik tu najil xook tumen in amigoso'obe' ku t'aaniko'ob le maayáaj xano', ichil in najil xane' kin t'anik, uts wáa in kaamaj tu ka'ap'éelil tumen beyo' je'el u páajtal in comunikartikimbae' yéetel in amigos bey xan in familiares, tene' yaan in ka'ansik tin paalal yo'olal u béeytal u t'aano'ob ich maayáaj bey xan yéetel je'emáaxe' tumen tierra maayáaj yano'on.

Vicente
Balam Kauil
60 años

Jump'éel ba'aj jach k'a'ana'an tumen jkáaj u ba'atel yéetel le sasak wíiniko'obo' bey xan yo'olal u paal Jacinto Pat, tumen leti'e' juntúul jala'ach, chéen ti' jump'éel k'iine' a'ala'ab ti' yaan u p'áatal u paalili ti' le conventoo', tumen ku bisa'alo'ob tak España, ts'o'oke' mix jaaji', bey túun leti' juntúul nojoch jala'ache' tu yilaj tu'ux ku bisbij u paalo', le ka tu yilaj ba'ax kun beetbij ti'e', ka tu lí'i'subáaj, tu nupubáaj yéetel u kaajil Tepich bey xan Chichimila', waay jkáaj le ba'ate'ila', jump'éel ba'ate'el ti' le yuum k'iino'ob españoleso'obo', tu ba'ateto'ob u libertad le maayaso'obo'.

Tene' way sijiene' le ka jtaalo'on way ti' le terrenoa' láaj k'aas, ma' utsi', puuróoj k'as áaktuno'ob, chéen ba'ax túun chen taalako'one' ku káajal in but'iko'on yéetel lu'um, soojol, ko'ob u bin u táaxtaj, jach k'aas ka'achij, pero bejla'e' mas o menos táan u táaxtaj, k'as tojchajij tumen táan ak limpiartike' ka k'as utslajij. Beorae' chéen bey p'aatala', waay kin yaantal yéetel in paalale' bey xan yéetel in watan.

Apolonia
Poot Tun
62 años

In papae' tene' Tek'omij, in mamae' Chichimilaj, leti'obe' nuuktak ka taasa'abo'ob tumen in abuela doña Julia yéetel in abueloe' don Austerio Tun, leti' le yáax taja'ano'ob waye', u k'aaba' in papaje' don Alfonso Poot, in mamae' doña Alejandra Tun.

K'as k'aja'an ten bix úuch yaniko'ob le bej beyo', ka'ach úuchile' chéen chan kajtaj, le bejo' chéen ich k'áax, bey u bej chan k'éek'ene', k'as k'aja'an ten.

To'one' seis u túulalo'on ti' in mama'on. Cinco xch'uup yéetel juntúul xiib, le ka jtaalo'ob in papajo'obe' waye', joventako'ob, ka tu yilaj in papaj in mamae' hasta ka tu máataj.
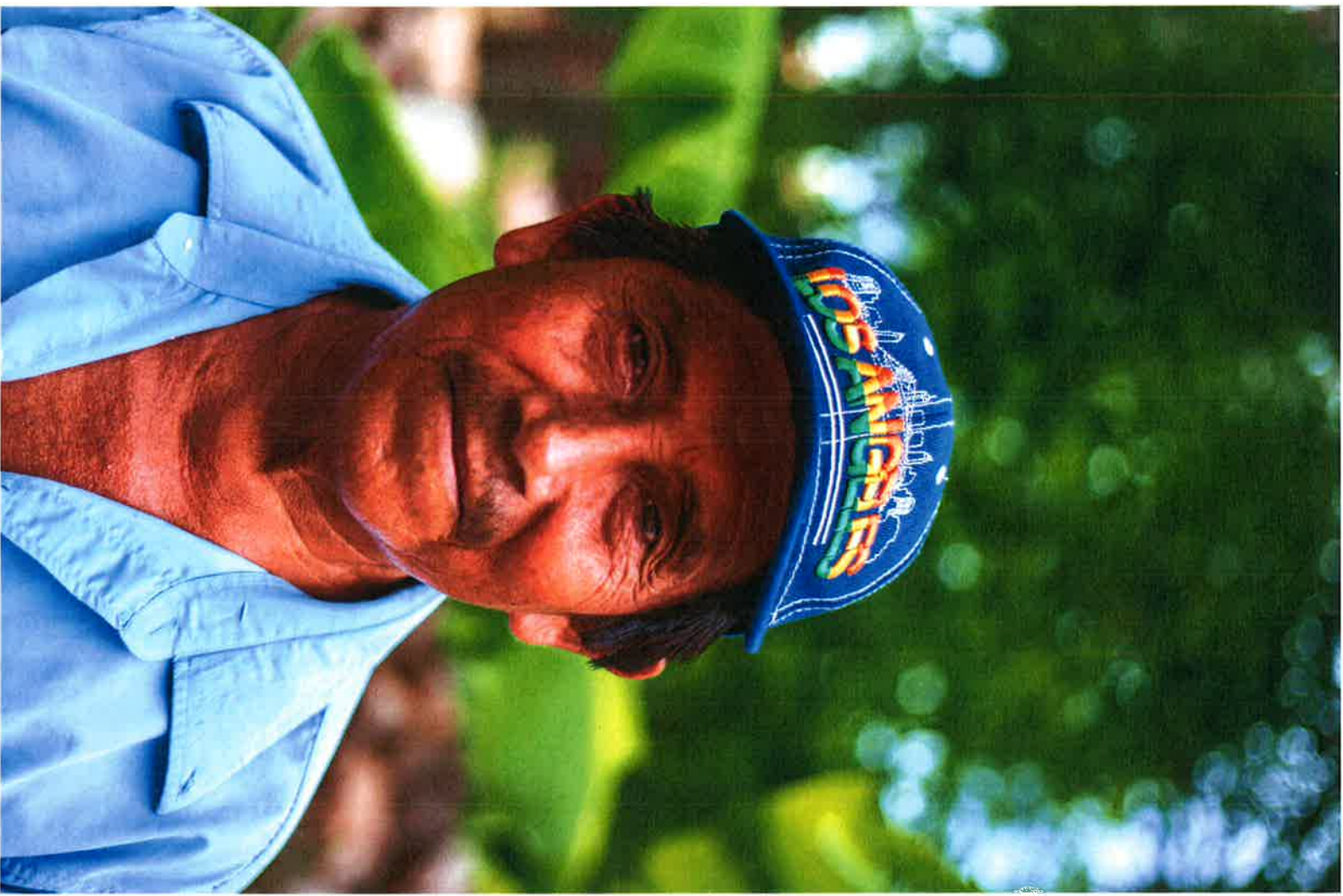
Mariano Chan Pat
67 años

Le ka jach suunajene' 16 años teen casi', waay tin beetaj in conscripto tumen marcharnajo'on xan orako', yaan soldados way te' parque ti' le tiempoako', leti'ob káansiko'on máarchar, táan in beetiko'on in servicio, miij yaan maanaj kex 49 años beorae', ts'o'ok u yúuchtal, 18 años yaanten ti' le orako', le úucho' ku taal soldados yaan orae', chéen taalako'obe' ku je'elelo'ob ti' le cuartelo', ti' le comisaria ejidalo', chéen cuartel yanik ka'achij, ma' comisaria yaan úuchi', chéen cuartel yanik ka'achij, pero desde ka káaj u formarta'al le comisariado'obo', leti' túun ka jp'áat ti' le komis le kúuchilo', wa ma' ka'ache' chéen cuartel yaani', je'en máax ka taalake' te' ku p'áatalo'obi', le soldados chéen taalako'obe' ti' ku wenelo'obi', u najilo'ob ka'ach úuchij pues ja'alij ka formarta'abij u comisariado'obe' leti' túun ka xu'ulij, bejla'e' casi ma'atech u taal soldados, chéen ku tookar bey yanik le úuch ka'acho'.

MUSEO DE LA GUERRA DE CASTAS —

Braulio
Kantun Poot
53 años

Jump'éel ba'al jach yaj óolil tumen tu p'ato'ob niikil le kaaja', le ka jk'ucho'ob in noolo'obe' láaj chéen ich k'áax, leti'obe' tek'omilo'ob, leti'ob le yáax jtaalo'ob waye', tene' waay siijene', in yuume' jkíim yaanten kamp'éel ja'ab, in na'e' yéetel in noole' leti'ob nojochkíinto'on, tumen 10 juntúulo'on, in noolo'obe' ku tsikbaltiko'ob yo'olal le ba'alte'elo', leti'obe' tu yilo'ob bix u kiinsa'al ya'ab máako'ob, chéen ba'ale' leti'obe' jpúuts'ob, tu ta'akuba'ob tumen chéen paalalo'ob tu yilo'ob bix u puts'ulo'ob. Tene' waay ts'o'ok in beele' yéetel yanchaj óoxtúul in paalal.

K'a'abet le táankelem paalalo'obo' ma' u ch'a'iko'ob subtalil' u t'aaniko'ob le maayat'aanò, u mootsilo'ob yéetel u tsikbalil u kaajilo'ob.

Bartolomé
Poot Moo
48 años

Ku tsikbalta'al bix úuchik u yúuchul ti' le iglesia beyo', tumen te' iglesiao' ku ya'aliko'obe' ma' ts'oon niiki', ma' cañón niiki' sino que náak u yóolo'ob le maayaso'ob le ku beeta'al óolaj ti'ob, ti'al u béeytal u jo'osik le máako'ob, le españoleso'obo', le curao'ob yaan ichil le iglesiao', yanchaj túun u túukultiko'obe' ku armarto'ob jump'éel chan bomba yéetel polvora tumen ka'ache' puro but'bij ts'oon, entonces leti' túun tu júuntarto'ob ...u yaalab u polvora'obo' tu armarto'ob ka tu to'ob yéetel suum, tu pa'ob ka tu to'ob yéetel pero juntúule' yo'olal ma' u kíinsa'ale' ka tu kuchaj jump'éel jajay tuunich tu sinel, ko'ob u bin kúukulpaachiil táan u bin u bisik le chan bomba u armarmo'obo' ka jk'uch túune' ka tu ja'ats'aj le lu'umo' ka tu mukaj, leti' úuch u niikil según u tsikbaltik le nukuch máako'obo', bey túun úuchik u p'áatal le iglesiao' tumen ma' ts'ooni', ma' cañoni', leti' le mismos maayas beeto'obo', yo'olal u jo'osa'al le curaso'obo' como que piim le iglesiao' mix táan u béeytal u jo'osa'alo'ob tumen chéen but'bij ts'oone' pues mix táan u k'uchul u yóol u ts'ono'obo' la'atene' mix táan u k'uchul u yóol u ts'oono'obi', leti' túun ka jo'osa'abo'ob le cura de españoleso'obo', bey u tsikbaltik ten in abuelo don Pablo Poot.

Demetrio
Poot Cahum
54 años

Así vinieron nuestros abuelos, a fomentar y que dijeron una historia, porque todavía hay descendientes que quedan que no han muerto. Pero los que s llegaron primero ya murieron. Pero la historia sigue, sigue, sigue pasando de hijos a nietos.

(En esta época) los listos agarraron los terrenos, dividieron lo que es la plaza, lo que es el centro. Elig(ieron)... Las casas coloniales, por eso existen en este tiempo. Entonces, así comenzó a fomentar ese pueblo...está hermosa la historia.

La preservación es una forma de que en unos años más, hasta nosotros ya no existirá, los hijos o los nietos pueden seguir viendo lo que es el recuerdo (de esa historia).

Secundino
Cahum Balam
57 años

Pues yo andaba en el mundo, andaba de aquí a Yucatán, Cancún, paseando, divirtiéndome. Y algún día me encontré a (ella) mi esposa. Y pensé viniera vivir acá, porque yo tenía 13 años cuando salí de mi casa, de mi pueblo, y anduve como 8 o 9 años fuera de mi pueblo. Después de un tiempo…decidimos comprar este terreno, y nos pasamos a vivir. Y hasta la primera palapa que ve, que vivimos…más de 30 años viviendo acá. A veces tenemos, a veces no hay. Así estamos luchando, trabajando y viviendo, y ella aprendió a hacer las hamacas. Ahora me ayuda con lo que hace. Cuando no tengo, ella tiene. Cuando tenemos los dos, nos disfrutamos los dos.

De la Guerra de Castas…muy poco sabemos…personalmente, sé muy poco porque en la escuela nunca nos dijeron. Sólo lo que comentan nuestros padres es que la Guerra de Castas hubo acá, en defensa de los pobres. Hasta esta hora, estamos tratando de conocer más.

Andrea
Poot Castillo
59 años

Somos pobres…cuando estamos pequeños, mi pobre mamá va a leñar para que venda, para que compra un poquito de algo para comer. Mientras que llega mi papá con un poco de dinero, pues es eso…crecimos así, así pobres. Somos 10, cinco mujeres y cinco varones, estaba duro el situación de antes…no como ahorita, hay un poco para buscar, para que coma…hay un poco de dinero.

Cuando me casé con el (Secundino), yo le ayudo a vender…tamales. Así crecen mis siete hijos, vendiendo. En tiempos de feria, salimos a vender en el parque. Hasta ahorita, mi trabajo es hacer las hamacas. Cuesta hacerlo, aunque no sale muy rápido, pero si sale poco a poco.

Maria Sacarías
Poot Moo
52 años

Yo...soy de aquí de Tihosuco pero mis padres son de Yucatán, mi papá es de Dzitnup, y mi mamá de Chikindzonot, Yucatán. Yo soy de acá, aquí nací. Nosotros somos cinco hermanos, uno falleció, y solo quedamos cuatro. Tres mujeres y un varón. Mi familia es pequeña, no es tan grande.

A mí siempre me ha gustado participar en programas, a veces cuando llegan gente para enseñar cosas, me gusta asistir. Cuando yo era joven... participaba yo mucho en bailar, me gusta mucho. En aquel tiempo, estaban llegando misioneros para enseñar varias cosas, varios talleres: costura, cocina, repostería. Y a mí lo que me gusta hacer, es participar en los bailes...pero ahora ya no. Ahora mi vida es diferente. Yo deje todos esas cosas... y yo fui a otra religión.

David
Puc Poot
24 años

La historia de Tihosuco…lo que me interesa, y que causa mucho revuelo es cuando fue refundado Tihosuco. La refundación del pueblo, según la historia que yo conozco, que mi bisabuelo que se llama Eleterio Puc. Vino en busca, quitado de un pueblo en Yucatán, buscando nuevos lugares para poder hacer su milpa. Entonces él estuvo caminando bastante y cazando, y topó con este lugar. Comenzó a ver que había ruinas, que había lo que es la iglesia, y él decidió hacer su milpa. Mis padres cuentan (que) el parque principal era su milpa. Luego de esto él decidió que era un bonito lugar para que viva gente y él igual empezó a organizar bailables…invitó a gente en los pueblos cercanos para que vengan. Y dice, porque no llevaban a sus hijas a bailar y nosotros vamos a dar el aguardiente para ustedes. Mi bisabuelo, él preparaba lo que es el licor, y de esa manera… estuvo repoblado lo que es Tihosuco.

Mariana Tun Poot
78 años

Yaan 6 años p'áataken tin juunal yéetel in paalal, láa beetike' tene' kin beetik ts'aak in konej, yaan u 6 jejeláasil ts'aako'ob, leti' túun kin beetik ti' le k'iino'oba', jabon, shampu yéetel jeelo'ob.

Tene' way siijene', in yuumo'obe' yucatanilo'ob tak Chichimilá, jtaalon waye' tumen te'elo' xu'up graciai', mina'an ba'al u jaanto'on ka túun tu ya'alo'obe' yaan u jóok'olo'ob u kaxto'ob ba'al u ts'ono'ob, juntúul túune' jna'ak ti' jump'éel u k'ab óox, tu yilaj túun le iglesiao', ka jbin u ya'al ba'ax ts'o'ok u yiilik, leti' túun ka taalo'ob waye', kantúulo'ob, 5 días le ku taalo'obe' leti' ka tu yiilo'obe' le iglesia, leti' túun ka tu yilo'ob yaan jump'éel nuxi óox ichil le iglesia, yaan ya'ax ba'alche'ob u jaanto'ob, ka tu ya'alo'obe' yaan u p'áatalo'ob, ka túun káajik u beetiko'ob u najilo'ob beyxan u koolo'ob, ku bino'on ku ka taalo'on hasta ka p'áato'ob tumen táan u miistiko'ob, ya'ab nukuch che'ob kaachil.

Jacinta
Puc Tuz
85 años

In papajo'obe' Chichimila'ilo'ob, in abueloso'obe' Chichimila'ilo'ob, yaanchaj u ya'alaj ti'ob yaan jump'éel kaaj ma' kaajsaki', ka túun tu ya'alo'obe' yaan u taalo'ob kajtal waye', ka tu ya'alo'obe' yaan u taalo'ob u k'aj óolto'ob, despues túune' ka taalo'ob u k'aj óolto'obe', ka tu yilo'ob mixmáak yaan waye', je'elo' despuese' ka tu yilo'ob uts tu yicho'ob ka túun tu ya'alo'obe' yaan u taalo'ob kajtal waye', je'el túuno' óotsil in maamae' túune' taak túun u taal tu pach u óotsil u suegrao', in óotsil in abuela doña Clavia, in abuelo don Nestor Puc, je'elo' ka túun tu ya'alaj óotsil in maamae'- yaan túun in taal ta paache'ex,- yáax paalen túun ti'- ka túun u ya'alaj ti'e' tu'ux ka chéen bin tu ts'u' k'áax, ka'ap'éel k'íin chen k'uchuko'oni', chéen chéen xíimbalij ko'on bin - ma' pero je'el in taale', yaan túun u mes u bin in kuxtal ti' in maamao' tu taaso'ob túun u chan gastoso'ob, u kuch xi'imo'ob, le ka k'ucho'obe', mika'aj túun u kaxto'ob le paak' ti'al u yantalo'ob in óotsil abuelo' leti' le tu'ux ku yantal le don Julian Xiixo' leti' túun tu najiltaj, in papae' leti' le tu'ux ku yantal le óotsil don Lorenzo Xiixo', je'elo' leti' le buka'aj tu k'alo'obo' . . . . . .

Idelfonza Moo Tuz
59 años

Tene' kin meyajtik janal, in maamáai ka'ansen meyaj ki'iwajo', chéen ba'ale' beorae' in paalale' ma' u k'áat u kano'obi', in hijae' táan u ya'alike' trabajo, kin meyajtik relleno, mechado, cochinita pues chen lelo', te' gremioso'obo', en las bodas kin máan in beetej.

Patricia
Tuz Chi
48 años

Mis abuelos allí hicieron su palapita donde estaba el mercado ahorita. Y después, creo que ellos no les gusto también las casas de pared. Buscaron su casa de allá afuera. Ellos cargaban sus animales. Mi mamá era sólo una niña cuando quitaron allá en Tekom. Criaron sus patos, sus pollos, sus pavos. Caminando 3 días cuando llegaron acá. Son de Yucatán.

Vivían después en un ranchito se llama Xcojil. Yo desde pequeña...allí crecí. No sé leer, no sé escribir, porque mi mamá antes dice que nosotros no sabemos leer, no sabemos de nada, pero nosotros no han muerto de hambre... Regreso con mi tía (a Tihosuco). Aquí encontré a mi marido. Esta de Xcojil está muy grande...arriba pueden a halar agua.

Nelson
Pat Poot
32 años

La Guerra de Castas significa para mí, es un arte, y un lugar donde podemos mostrar a la gente turísticos para que vengan a conocer el pueblo. Acá el pueblo está perdiendo mucho. Nosotros queremos que vengan a conocer, a ver todo que es la tradición....

Queremos que también demostrarles cosas que ellos nunca los vieron. Como lo que es los barros, las artes que siempre hacían acá en el pueblo, los juegos, lo que es de saltar, lo que es bicicleta de carreras, antiguamente había carrito de madera. Son tradicionales, son de madera, siempre me había gustaba esto, porque jugaba en todo el pueblo... Soy maestro de educación artística, de folklore, doy clases en Chetumal, y a veces vengo acá. Soy maestro de danza acá. No quiero perderlo... folklore. No quiero perderlo... la historia.

PROMESA

Pablo
Tec Poot
66 años

U ma'alobil úuchik u yúuchul le guerrao' es que beorae' to'one' beorae' libreon, to'one' ki'imak wóolo'on tumen kanarta'ab le guerrao' pues es que leti'obe' tu sufrirto'ob beyo' tumene' tu yu'ubo'ob uk'aj, tu yu'ubo'ob wi'ij, kiinsa'abo'ob, kano'ob, tuláakal ba'al úuch ti'ob, en cambio to'one' pues tak bien tumen bejla'e' táan ak che'ejtik tak awáajtik, to'one' libre'on, meyaj je'el tu'uxake', ma' leti'obe' ma' beyo', leti'obe' u ch'i'ibal in abuelos, in bisabuelos, leti'ob sufrirmij tumen leti'obe' ku ya'aliko'obe', chéen xi'ikech meyaj ti' juntúul ts'uule' wáaj ta ch'a'aj jump'éel, wáaj ch'a'aj chan kuartilla wáaj jump'éel real ti'obe' mina'an u xuul a bo'otik........

Antonia Poot Tuz
42 años

Tumen leti'obe' ts'o'ok u máano'ob tu belili', ts'o'ok u yiliko'ob jump'éel kaambal tso'ok u beetiko'ob beyo', la'en túune' yo'olal ma' u yúuchul ku t'aaniko'ob u paalalo'ob xan, bey tu beelo', tumen ka'ach úuchile' ken a'alake' le maamáajtsil, tatatsil jach nonojba'alo'ob, ba'ale' yaan k'a'anan u yu'ubiko'ob yo'olal u jo'olo'ob táanil, yo'olal ma' u ka'a suut u túukulto'ob paachile'- wáaj ka'ach in wu'uy u t'aan in maamae', wáaj ka'ach kin wu'uy u t'aan in taatáaj in wa'alike' mix táan u yúuchul ten beyo'-. ba'ale' in túukultik tene' yo'olal le internet, yo'olal xan u jejeláasil ba'alo'ob ku yiliko'obe', leti' ku kaniko'ob beyo', leti' túun jelbesik u tuukulo'ob, ba'ale' kin tukultike', ka kajtal yáanal u najil a taatae', a k'a'ana'an u ts'o'okbesiko'obe le t'aanno.

Tumen ma' tu juunal ku kaxtik u kuxtali', leti'ob ts'áaik le taak'ino' ka béeychajak u xook, ka béeychajak u manik u nook', la'en túune' le t'aano' k'a'ana'an k ts'o'okbesiko'on, tumen yaan kiine kéen in wu'uy u ya'aliko'obe' teche' jach úuchben tuukul yaan tech -tú vives muy a la antigua- ba'ale ma', tumen wáaj ka wile' yaan ba'alo'ob uts, tak le je'el túuno' wáaj ku tukle uts, ma' k'aasi'.

German
Balam Kauil
69 años

Le ka k'ucho'on waye' ma'
bey la kaaja', ma' bey le
calleso'oba', le calleso'obo'
chéen ich tuunicho'ob, chéen
ich lu'um ku máan máak, le
ka'ach úuchilo' mina'an naj jach
avanzado, jach chéen xa'anil
naj, weyano'on túune', ka lu'ub
jump'éel ciclon ti' paalalilo'on,
míij yaan to'on 10 años to'on,
pero fuerte u k'aabe'e' Janet
Gilda, pues le ka'ach úuchilo'
ma'atech ak ilik le tormentaj
beyo', míij 24 horas ku beetik le
huracano', pero lelo' huracán
tumen leti' loobitej Chetumal,
entonces pues le úucho'
ya'akach nukuch k'áaxo'ob yaan
ya'ach ba'alche'ob, yaan kéej,
yaan kitam, yaan k'ambul, yaan
jaalebo'ob, pues bey u kaxtik
u kuxtal máako', le cosecha
ka'acho' ku yaantal tumen yaan
ja' láalaj k'iin, pero pues bejla'e'
táan in wilike' diferente, kex
táan ak beetik ak koolo'one' mix
táan u yantal, kex táan ak beetik
ya'abe' maas ya'ab kak puulike'
tumen ku láaj k'astal wáaj kak
perdertiik, chéen wáaj ba'ax ti' ku
kaxtik u kuxtal máak......

**Roman
Tuz Pat**
74 años

Le paalalo'ob te' k'iino'oba'
diferente'ob, tumen le
paalalo'ob beorae' mix táan
u béeytal a tsolik u beelo'ob
yo'olal le xooko', mix táan
u béeytal maas u yóolo'ob
keet to'on, in mejen áabilo'on
to'one' kin t'aaniko'on waye',
kin wa'aliko'on ti'ob le ba'ax
ma' utso', kin tsolik u xikino'ob
yaan ora, beyxane' yaan orae'
ku yu'ubiko'ob, wáa teen
a'al ti'obe' ku yu'ubiko'ob
chéen ba'ax ma' u yóolo'ob,
beorae', to'one' ak ojéelbil
maayáak pero leti'obe' ma'
beyo', to'one' mil veces ak ojel
maayáaj pero leti'obe' ma', kin
ka'ansiko'ob maayáaj chéen
algunes ku núukiko'ob, mix
táan u na'atiko'ob, k'a'ana'an u
kaniko'ob le xooko', k'a'ana'an
u kaniko'ob le maayáao', táan
u p'iskuba'ob u ya'alo'ob pero
ma', mix táan u jóok'ol claroil,
to'one' jach mayero'on, laj
beetike' to'on ka'ansik ti'ob ...

Clemente
Puc Tun
63 años

Lete' k'a'abet u k'uchu' ti' tuláakal
máak ku yóoyto'obe' ti' u ts'áako'ob
u kanko' pues u muk'ajkunso'
túun le ba'ax ts'o'ok u yúuchula',
ma' u cha'ik u ka'atéen máake' u
ka'a suut ti' le paalitsilo', sino ka
ka'a ka'aj u yiik'al máak u yilej
bix u taal le u k'e'exel le u bin
meyajta'ala', ka tuukulnake' ma'
ma'alob le paalitsilo', maas ma'alob
le jáalk'abo'on yéetel tuláakal
páajtalil ts'áaj a to'on tumen le
nojoch jalacho'obe' uti'al u meetik
meyaj yéetel ti'al k logrartik ba'ax
k'a'abet ti' to'on, pues tuláakal
lela' jach seen ma'alob, ojala
pues ka seguirnak a k'áatke'ex
ti' uláak' máak u yoojlo'obe' ka
much'kúunsej, estén ka lograrte', u
seten ma'alobile' ka óoyta'ak yo'olal
le meyaj ka taal a beetke'exo', ka
seguirnak u meyajchajaj je'el bix le
meyai ku taal u beet Don Richaro',
le ku chíikbesik ka ilak'aj jach seten
ma'alobe' ti'olale' pues le paala' ku
taala' maas mejentako', ku ts'áajo'
cuenta ba'ax óolal tun beeta'al le
ba'alo'ob je'ela', ku kane' u sen
nojochkúunstube' le ba'ax ku yiko',
u beeta'al ma' u tú'ubsiko' tumen
lela' jach ucha'an, jach ucha'ane'
uti'al u k'a'abetile' ti' to'on yéetel k
paalal yéetel u paalil in k paalalo'on,
bey túuno' pues ki wa'alte'ex
bejla'ake' jach jats'uts, jach dios
bo'otik le ka k'áatke'ex up'íit in
wo'ojlo', leti' ki wa'al xan ti' te'ex.