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Reading Maud Oakes:

An Essay on Ethnography, Psychoanalysis, and Family History

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Master of Arts
in Latin American Studies

by

Addison Nealon Woolsey

2021

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Reading Maud Oakes:

An Essay on Ethnography, Psychoanalysis, and Family History

by

Addison Nealon Woolsey

Master of Arts in Latin American Studies

University of California, Los Angeles 2021

Professor Kevin Terraciano, Chair

Maud Oakes (1903-1990) was an American painter, anthropologist, and a student of Carl Jung. This thesis offers a close reading of two of her ethnographic texts based on fieldwork conducted in Todos Santos Cuchumatán, Guatemala between 1945 and 1947. It then considers Maud's legacy in Todos Santos in light of the extensive ethnographic canon that has developed in the town from the 1940s to the present day. Finally, I turn to her break with anthropology in the 1950s and subsequent research and writing on analytic psychology. Maud's unique position in mid-twentieth century American culture points to convergences and divergences between intellectual currents that are often analyzed through an artificial disciplinary isolation, thereby obscuring their common ties.

The thesis of Addison Nealon Woolsey is approved.

Laurie Kain Hart

Robin Derby

Kevin Terraciano, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2021

For my grandmother, Kay Woolsey

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Lastly, thanks to Maud Oakes for being such a generous phantom.

Introduction: On Family and Disciplinary History

*Please God, make me open to receive and to be egoless.*¹

Maud Oakes

This thesis is based on the close reading of my great aunt Maud Oakes's ethnographic and psychoanalytic writings. There is a curious *mise-en-abyme* at play when one analyzes how one's ancestor looked at others—a double reflection that has made this project both historical, ethnographic, and self-reflexive. Reading Maud is at once about trying to understand her cultural milieu and, simultaneously, how my interest in anthropology both reinforces our kinship ties and estranges us as a result of the discipline's evolution. Maud Oakes was an American painter, ethnographer and psychoanalytically-oriented scholar. In examining her work, my field site is fundamentally bound up in my own memories and those of my family; in the ways Maud was spoken of and remembered; and in an act of reading that is both scholarly and personal. While Maud died before I was born, her remarkable presence continues to echo today in my own life and work as an artist and scholar of Latin America. A benevolent (and at times awkward) phantom, she is rendered both ethnographer and informant here, her voice recovered textually, archivally, and through family recollections.

It is unclear whether anyone in my family has ever actually read her ethnographies, yet I grew up thinking of Maud as a figure of power, prestige, intellect, wealth and wit. She is

¹ Oakes, Maud. *The Stone Speaks: the Memoir of a Personal Transformation*. Wilmette, IL: Chiron Publ., 1987. Xxv.

remembered as an intellectual, an artist, a writer, a cosmopolitan. As a strict yet enlightened aunt. She was neighbors with Henry Miller in Big Sur. She studied with Carl Jung. She dreamt of and paid for my dad to move to Japan in the 1980s, where he met my mom. My reading is inevitably bound up with these earlier evocations of her life, and the archival work itself is made possible by documents of hers which remain with the family—the discovery of which began not without some difficulty.

In March of 2020, I left Los Angeles in a blur to join my grandma in Santa Barbara. Panic concerning the Covid-19 pandemic was growing daily, and in-person coursework had been postponed indefinitely. Upon arriving, one of the first things I did was visit the shed behind her home that had once been filled with cardboard boxes and filing cabinets of family documents and photos. Behind chewed-open plastic bags and soggy wool blankets, a single plastic box lay tightly closed. On the front, “Maud” was scrawled in my grandmother’s handwriting. I lifted the box out—already alarmed by its light weight—and put it on the floor. Kneeling beside it, I unlatched the lid and pried it open. Inside, there was nothing but a layer of empty moth casings. Every archive is defined by its absences, by the information and documented omitted, destroyed, and lost, but this was particularly true in this case. What had been in this box?

Fortunately, this erasure is not the end of the story. Several years before, my brother had somewhat surreptitiously relocated hundreds of family documents from my grandmother’s house to our parents’ basement in Seattle. After some pleading on my part, my mother agreed to search through a labyrinth of boxes for the documents. When she found them, she discovered a scrapbook compiled by Maud in the early 1950s which tracks the reception of her books and archives her correspondences with artists, anthropologists, writers, and diplomats who wrote to her. Among

these documents are a letter from Edmund S. Whitman, United Fruit Company's Director of Publicity, manuscript edits from the anthropologist Oliver La Farge, reviews by the University of Chicago anthropologist Sol Tax, and tens of press clippings in English and German. Without access to these documents—nearly discarded by my family—reconstructing Maud's life would have been nearly impossible. Maud's materials in the Bollingen Foundation Papers at the Library of Congress and the Jerome Hill Papers at the University of Minnesota are further sites of research that have remained out of reach due to the pandemic. Fortunately, the documents contained in the scrapbook have proven a rich enough archive to begin understanding the reception of Maud's work by her contemporaries.

This thesis is divided into two sections. The first is primarily anthropological and historical: it offers a close reading of Maud's writing on Todos Santos, exploring how her work can be read in light of Clifford's provocation to analyze ethnography as a textual practice.² I am particularly interested in two of Maud's ethnographies based on fieldwork she did in the mid-1940s in the Guatemalan highlands: *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos* and *Beyond the Windy Place*, both published in the United States in 1951. Both are remarkable cultural artifacts that illustrate certain mid-century discourses around indigeneity, cultural patrimony, and anthropological initiation. Published nearly simultaneously, the former more clearly follows ethnographic norms while the latter is a memoir of Maud's time in the field. These two texts were also, by all indication, wildly successful and, I will argue, played a foundational role in *producing* Todos Santos as a recurrent site for anthropological research spanning over seventy years. My initial intention was to return to

² Lerner, Jesse. *The Maya of Modernism: Art, Architecture, and Film*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2011. In *The Maya of Modernism*, Lerner examines different visual, textual, and architectural discourses of American modernism that show a sustained fascination with the Maya. In part, my own project is motivated by the question of how and why Maud arrived in Todos Santos. While there are some leads in her own writing and in William McGuire's *Bollingen: an Adventure in Collecting the Past*, I believe any thorough answer will require a broader reconstruction of contemporary discourses concerning the Maya in the United States.

Todos Santos in the summer of 2020, but due to the pandemic, I have shifted my focus to framing Maud's work in the context of the history of ideas. Starting from a close reading of Maud's work, I will extend outwards towards the broader intellectual circuits and milieux that drove her endeavors, while also considering the ways her legacy continues even today in contemporary representations of Todos Santos.

The second section of this thesis will draw on Maud's later life and work, specifically her memoir *Teaching a Stone to Speak*, in order to explore the tensions and continuities in her ethnographic and psychological writing. By the 1950s, anthropology was already a splintered, contradictory discipline, variously influenced by behaviorist psychology, Freudian psychoanalysis, cold war geopolitics, and the emergence of structuralism. Nonetheless, Boas's legacy remained strong as students such as Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, and Alfred Kroeber had played a foundational role in the establishment of anthropology departments in universities across the United States. Boasian commitment to cultural relativism and historic particularism was inherently at odds with Jung's universalist, archetypal theories.³ In particular, Boas's anthropology was predicated on models of cultural diffusion that disputed the authority of the expansive synchronic comparative models that had characterized Victorian anthropology.⁴

³ As Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn wrote in their 1952 *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, for Boas "different influences can produce similar effects, and...causes are multiple and must be independently ascertained in each case with due regard to the specificity of its history" (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 151). His focus on local historical circumstances thus pushed anthropology away from E.B. Tylor's comparative method.

⁴ Although structuralism arrives in the Anglophone world slightly after the publication of Maud's work, a parallel and near contemporary critique is made by Lévi-Strauss in *The Savage Mind* that is worth considering in considering mid-century anthropological responses to Jung's comparative endeavor: "These observations seem to make it possible to dispose of theories making use of the concepts of 'archetypes' or a 'collective unconscious.' It is only forms and not contents which can be common. *If there are common contents the reason must be sought either in the objective properties of particular natural or artificial entities or in diffusion and borrowing*, in either case, that is, outside the mind." Here, Lévi-Strauss rejects a psychological explanation of archetypes, instead arguing that one must look to environmental and historical (diffusionist) factors in explaining like cultural forms. Lévi-Strauss, Claude. *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018. 65.

Working between these irreconcilable systems, Maud's work thus represents a unique nexus of anthropological and Jungian intuitions, assumptions, and methods. Before proceeding to the analysis of the shifting relation between anthropology and psychoanalysis in her work, however, it is necessary to provide first a brief overview of her life and career as an amateur anthropologist.

Born in 1903, Maud grew up on Bainbridge Island, an island on Puget Sound a short ferry ride from Seattle. As a teenager, she studied painting under Mark Tobey and befriended Morris Graves, both prominent Seattle artists today grouped together as a school of 'Northwest Mystics,' the Pacific Northwest's response to abstract expressionism.⁵ Living in New York in her twenties, Maud met Mary Conover (soon to be Mellon) and became involved with a group of writers, artists, academics, psychologists, and theosophists brought together by the aesthetic and psychological allure of Carl Jung's writings.⁶ This group cohered around Mary Mellon, who spent the 1930s and 1940s developing what became the Bollingen Foundation, a publishing and research institute that played a key role in introducing Jung's work in the United States during the post-war era, as well as publishing texts on comparative religion, myth, ethnography, and alchemy.⁷

In the 1940s, Maud conducted ethnographic fieldwork in a Navaho community and subsequently in the Western Guatemalan highlands, resulting in a number of anthropological publications.⁸ In the 1950s, following a harrowing car crash in the Andes that prematurely cut off

⁵ Oakes 1987. Xxv.

⁶ McGuire, William. *Bollingen: an Adventure in Collecting the Past*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989. See pages 6-9 for a general overview of the intellectual milieu Maud and Mary moved through in New York.

⁷ Ibid 35.

⁸ Maud's work with the Navaho was published as *When the Two Came To Their Father: A Navaho War Ceremonial*. Her ethnographic texts on Todos Santos are *Beyond the Windy Place: Life in the Guatemalan Highlands* and *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos*. A series of Maud's paintings, based on Navaho sand paintings made by Jeff King, Maud's main Navaho informant, were also shown at the National Gallery in Washington D.C.

her fieldwork in Peru, she met Jung while convalescing in the south of France. This encounter spurred a remarkable reorientation in her work away from ethnographic concerns with locality and local cultural practice towards a more esoteric psychological approach to the interpretation of culture and mind. This later stage of her work culminated in her final publication in 1987, *The Stone Speaks: The Memoir of a Personal Transformation*. At the time of publication, she had spent more than twenty years on the manuscript, and by the time it was published she had begun to lose her memory.⁹ Part memoir, part dream diary, part epistolary archive, the book is a chaotic reflection on her ethnographic work with the Navaho and the Mam in light of her later relationship with Jung and years of psychoanalysis. Maud died at her home in Carmel in 1990 at the age of 87.¹⁰

This partial, fragmented biographical account must remain, for now, a sketch. It lays out the contours for this project—the interwoven threads of art, anthropology, and psychology—that will be further explored below. Maud’s unique position in mid-century American (and, peripherally, Latin American) culture illustrates dynamic cultural negotiations between artistic movements and academic disciplines that are often treated as isolated historical trajectories. In this sense, Maud has been written about by historians and anthropologists, but to my knowledge no one has holistically examined the different dimensions of her life and work.¹¹ It is precisely at the

⁹ My paternal grandmother, Catherine Woolsey, was Maud’s conservator and the executor of estate; she spent significant periods with Maud when she was struggling with Alzheimer’s and at her house after her passing. I have spent the last year living with my grandmother and she has provided many anecdotes and sketches of Maud’s place in the family.

¹⁰ “Maud Oakes, 87, Dies; Ethnologist and Writer.” *New York Times*. June 13, 1990.

¹¹ See Burrell, Jennifer L. *Maya after War: Conflict, Power, and Politics in Guatemala*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2014. Perera, Victor. *Unfinished Conquest: the Guatemalan Tragedy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. McGuire 1989 also offers a brief consideration of her legacy across different disciplines in *Bollingen: an Adventure in Collecting the Past*.

intersection of her varied intellectual endeavors that the trajectory of her career, and project, can best be grasped.

Maud's position as both a woman and amateur anthropologist is central to understanding her career.¹² Between November of 1945 and April of 1947, Maud spent seventeen months conducting ethnographic fieldwork in Todos Santos Cuchumatán, a Mam Maya town in the Cuchumatán mountain range, located in the northwestern highlands of Guatemala near the border with Chiapas, Mexico. Both her fieldwork and a writing period in New York afterwards were funded by the Bollingen Foundation. While working on my Master's in Latin American Studies, her ethnographic writing on Guatemala became an entry point to connect my interest in the region with my studies in the history of anthropology.

In her poetic rendering of dialogue and place, the representation of conflict, desire, and confusion (both hers and that of her informants), and the consistent use of the first-person, her books anticipate both anthropology's reflexive turn (Clifford and Marcus 1986) and the emergence of autoethnography by several decades. My aim is not to articulate a claim to singularity, but rather to revisit her work with later debates about ethnography as genre and literary practice in mind. As George Marcus and Michael Fischer argue in *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*, the proliferation of experimental ethnographies in the 1980s began when authors "look[ed] back for inspiration to recognized classics by Malinowski, Evans-Pritchard, and others, felicitously misread them, and

¹² Abu-Lughod, Lila. "Writing Against Culture" in *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. School of American Research Press. 137-162. 1996. In "Writing Against Culture," Lila Abu-Lughod pointedly rejects Clifford and Marcus's claim in *Writing Culture* that the exclusion of feminist anthropologists in their collection was due to the lack of feminist engagement with questions of ethnographic style. Notably, Abu-Lughod points to an alternative ethnographic canon that she describes as a "woman's tradition," made up of the books written and published by the (often) untrained wives of midcentury anthropologists (see Abu-Lughod 475). Maud does not fit this exact profile (Todos Santos noted the absence of a husband), but I argue her work can be considered in line with this canon.

dr[e]w out their underplayed forgotten, or latent possibilities.”¹³ My engagement with Maud is likewise a sort of felicitous misreading indebted to concerns that emerged in anthropological theory in the 1970s and 1980s.

Although Maud was not an academically trained anthropologist, she prepared for her fieldwork by reading relevant ethnographic literature and received advice from a number of prominent anthropologists. *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos* features an introduction by Paul Radin, a midcentury anthropologist who had studied under Franz Boas, while her earlier work with the Navaho included guidance from the Harvard anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn and resulted in a joint publication with Joseph Campbell.¹⁴ Significantly, both Radin and Kluckhohn were connected to psychoanalysis in the 1930s and 40s through Abram Kardiner’s seminar at the New York Psychoanalytic Society and Institute on adaptational psychodynamics, a field which sought to integrate ethnographic data with psychoanalytic theory. As Kevin Groark argues, “Kardiner’s goal was to understand how particular social structures, institutions, and socialization practices interacted throughout early development to produce culturally distinct personalities with characteristic psychodynamics profiles.”¹⁵ In 1963, Maud also coauthored a study on analytic psychology and comparative mythology with Joseph Henderson that focused on myths of death and rebirth.¹⁶ Taken altogether, her prolific and collaborative output was thoroughly interdisciplinary.

¹³ Marcus, George E., and Fischer Michael M J. *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: an Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2004. 40.

¹⁴ McGuire 65.

¹⁵ Groark, Kevin P. “Freud among the Boasians: Psychoanalytic Influence and Ambivalence in American Anthropology.” *Current Anthropology* 60, no. 4 (2019): 559–88. <https://doi.org/10.1086/704711>. 569.

¹⁶ Henderson, Joseph L., and Maud Oakes. *The Wisdom of the Serpent: the Myths of Death, Rebirth, and Resurrection*. New York, NY: George Braziller, 1963.

Perhaps because of her connections to a group of artists, writers, and psychoanalysts who came together through a collective, esoteric engagement with Jung, her writing and research on religion and mythology was never purely scholarly, and consistently centered her subjectivity and the transformative experience of research as initiation.¹⁷ Reflecting on her time in Todos Santos later in life, Maud wrote: “I had many difficult experiences, but I accepted them, for inwardly I felt that they were tests I had to meet and experience in this life, similar to the ancient initiations.”¹⁸ Although many ethnographers of her day shared this experience of initiation, from outside of the university, she was able to produce a set of texts that are rather idiosyncratic—they did not adhere to disciplinary norms of separating data from personal experience. Likewise, her ethnographic writing constantly drew from her own beliefs about the universal veracity of religious practice and the collective unconscious structuring all symbolic systems.¹⁹ Maud also wrote with remarkable transparency about dispensing medicine and paying informants’ debts. Her open discussion of these exchanges makes legible certain power relations that were written out of many mid-century ethnographies based on what James Clifford sees as the ideological notion of ethnography as “transparency of representation”.²⁰ These will become more apparent in the following section, which documents Maud’s fieldwork and writing practice in Todos Santos.

¹⁷ “In the winter of 1943-44, [Maud] was attending classes on symbolism, myth, astrology, and Theosophy given by Natacha Rambova.” McGuire 89.

¹⁸ Oakes. *The Stone Speaks*. 3.

¹⁹ This sense of a transcendent religious spirit emerges at numerous points in her ethnographies on Guatemala.

²⁰ An example of this may be seen in the fact that Laura Bohannon published *Return to Laughter* (1954) as an ‘anthropological novel,’ and published it under the pen name Elenore Smith Bowen. In the introduction to *Writing Culture*, James Clifford writes that “The fact that [writing] has not until recently been portrayed or seriously discussed reflects the persistence of an ideology claiming transparency of representation and immediacy of experience.” Clifford, James, 1986. Introduction: Partial Truths. 1-26. In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2.

Maud in Todos Santos, Todos Santos after Maud

*What is her work? Where does her money come from? Ah, who knows! She distributes medicine, gives it away free, now to one person, now to another, and they pay nothing. Ah, where is there nowadays a person who gives away presents for nothing in return?*²¹

Marcelino Pablo, cited in *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos*

*Nowhere in the two books are data put into either historical or theoretical context. Miss Oakes evidently came to Todos Santos uncluttered by concepts or historical problems, hence without genuine questions. Her work is better read as a personal document, therefore, than as a contribution to anthropological knowledge.*²²

Sol Tax, *Saturday Review of Literature*

The Two Crosses of Todos Santos and *Beyond the Windy Place* were published simultaneously and contain comparable accounts of Maud's time in Todos Santos; the former, however, is structured topically ("The Mode of Life," "Religion and Religious Organization," "How to Become a Chimán," etc.), while the latter proceeds chronologically. Here, I will focus on *Beyond the Windy Place*, which provides a stronger narrative account of Maud's time in Todos Santos and offers a more coherent portrayal of Maud's fieldwork. I will also refer to *The Two Crosses of*

²¹ Oakes, Maud. *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos: Survivals of Mayan Religious Ritual*. New York: Pantheon Books. (1951b). 267.

²² Tax, Sol. "Review of *Beyond the Windy Place* and *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos* by Maud Oakes." *Saturday Review of Literature*. December 8, 1951.

Todos Santos, as it includes essential information about Maud's research agenda on Maya religiosity and is more frequently cited in contemporary ethnographies of Guatemala. After providing an overview of Maud's time in the field, I will explore key themes that emerge throughout the two texts: the politics of photography, Maud's work as town doctor, and the role of reflexivity in her account.

In 1944, Maud flew to Mexico City, where she met the noted Mexican art historian, caricaturist, and artist Miguel Covarrubias. Initially, she considered conducting fieldwork in Mexico, but it was Covarrubias who "urged her to focus on Guatemala" in her research. From Mexico City, she flew to Guatemala City and traveled to Chichicastenango in the western highlands. In her initial time in Guatemala, prior to searching for a field site and articulating her research agenda, Maud worked for the American ethnomusicologist Henriette Yurchenco, serving as a photographer while they traveled between isolated Quiché Maya communities in the Cuchumatán mountain range recording traditional music.²³

Maud lived in Todos Santos from November 1945 to April 1947; she visited Todos Santos twice, however, before deciding to pursue her fieldwork there. She writes: "I had heard three things about Todos Santos that appealed to me: first that no roads led to the pueblo, second that there was no resident Catholic priest who might have colored their religious ceremonies, and third that the Indians, known as *Mames*, still lived by the ancient Mayan calendar."²⁴ Beyond these objective criteria, suggesting at least some degree of isolation from contemporary evangelism and modernization, Maud also describes an encounter with a village elder on her first trip: "He greeted me and looked deeply into my eyes with a searching, impersonal glance. I had never seen such a

²³ McGuire 90.

²⁴ Oakes, Maud. *Beyond the Windy Place: Life in the Guatemalan Highlands*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Young. (1951a). 4.

beautiful face. It was the face of a sage, full of wisdom, peace, and strength. His hair was white, he was beardless and his eyes were full of power.”²⁵ I include this description here because it points to how Maud’s gaze was bound up in a broader American project of representing the contemporary Maya as the fossilized remains of the ancient Maya, whose practices could be excavated ethnographically in a sort of cultural archeology that sought to scrape away the superficial acculturative elements of Christianity. The allure of Todos Santos was to be found in its isolation, but also in Maud’s preconceived image of the Maya as the decayed (yet preserved) remains of the Americas’ most advanced indigenous civilization.²⁶ This notion of culture as archeological excavation will arise again in part two with Maud’s description of analytic psychology as an archeology of the mind.

On a second scouting trip to Todos Santos, made during the town’s titular carnival on All-Saints’ Day (held October 31-November 2), Maud succeeded in setting up a contract to rent and renovate the home of a *Ladina*²⁷ woman living in Todos Santos. Importantly, the house was located slightly outside of the town center and had Mam residents on all sides. From her first visits, Maud had recognized the antagonism that existed between the Mam and Ladino residents of Todos Santos, and she chose to demonstrate her sympathy for the Mam: “I made it my policy to acquire no close friends among the *ladinos* except Francisco Palacios (Don Pancho) and his wife, the

²⁵ Ibid 10.

²⁶ While anthropologists are, one hopes, more attentive to the actual cultural practices, it is true that ethnography forms part of the cultural production that “invents” the Maya for an American audience. As Jesse Lerner writes, ““The multiple and contradictory roles the Maya have played in the modern imagination are not at all revealing of the Maya or their culture, but of the mindset, prejudices, needs, and thought processes of the numerous filmmakers, architects, photographers, painters, sculptors, and other artists who have contributed to this discourse” (Lerner 15).

²⁷ Ladino is variously used for acculturated indigenous people, mixed race people, and Spanish-descended Guatemalans living in the highlands throughout Maud’s books. At times it is a racial or ethnic marker, at others it signifies cultural practices or class status.

village schoolmistress.”²⁸ Upon her relocation to the town, Maud hired a Mam woman, Simona, as a maid, and her neighbor, Domingo, became her *mozo*. She paid both generously by local wage norms, helped them pay off debt, and scandalized the ladino population through her decision to invite Simona to eat at her table each day.²⁹

Upon her arrival in Todos Santos, Maud was the only foreigner living in the town, although the house she ended up renting had been built to accommodate an American on an agricultural survey some years before. As in other ethnographic accounts, her arrival stirred up great curiosity in the town. If anthropologists are at times accused of producing exoticizing accounts of others, this experience inverts the narrative in illustrating the sense of precarity and alienation often faced by ethnographers. As Maud writes, “If I walked near the window [the children] screamed with terror mixed with delight and rushed down the street. I felt as if I were on exhibition, like an animal in the zoo.”³⁰ Like Laura Bohannan’s narrator in *Return to Laughter*, Maud finds herself assailed and overwhelmed by the lack of privacy and the sense of being at all times “under the scrutiny of some pair of black eyes.”³¹³² Perhaps more than any methodological problem, the early weeks of fieldwork are defined by the tedium of setting up home and the exhaustion of alienation.

Along with her maid Simona, Maud’s sole Ladino friend, Don Pancho, became one of her first informants, as well as her Spanish teacher. When he asked her about why she had come to

²⁸ Oakes 1951b. 16.

²⁹ “For this action of mine, without my knowing it, helped to lay the foundation of real friendship with the Indians. I remember one of my closest Indian friends saying to me a year later: ‘Senorita, when you asked Simona to eat with you, it made us *naturales* curious, for a Ladino would never do that. It changed our feeling for you.’” Oakes 1951a 42.

³⁰ Ibid 34.

³¹ Ibid 37.

³² Bohannan, Laura. *Return to Laughter: an anthropological novel*. London: Gollancz. 1954.

Todos Santos, her response evinces the early influence of Jung on her thought: “You probably learned in School, Don Pancho, that the growth of a man from a single cell to an evolved human being is but a repetition of the evolution of all organic life...There is now a theory held by some people that the soul of man, his *anima*, as you call it, undergoes the same kind of development. This soul can be best observed and understood by studying the soul of all mankind.”³³ When asked to specify how the "soul of all mankind" can be studied, Maud replies with a simple answer: through the study of religion. She expands on this response, stating that “unfortunately, pure religious forms are fast disappearing. There exist at present few areas in the world untouched by our present civilization. I hope to find here in this remote village religious customs that still exist from the Mayans, the ancestors of these Indians...”³⁴ Thus, even during her early ethnographic work, Maud’s interest in indigenous religion was bound up in a comparative project that sought to understand the development of the soul. As with other research initiatives funded by the Bollingen Foundation, Maud’s task was essentially to collect ethnographic data for a Jungian archive.³⁵ While this project becomes more explicit later in her life, especially in *The Stone Speaks*, in the 1940s her friendship with Mary Mellon and knowledge of Jung were already shaping her research.

As I noted in the introduction, Maud’s self-awareness and reflexive commentaries on her fieldwork are part of what have made me interested in her work as a precursor to the "writing turn" of the 1980s. When two American women appeared unexpectedly at her door in Todos Santos, looking for a room for the night, she laments: “I wanted to spend my first Christmas in Todos Santos alone. I had visualized a martyr role for myself—white woman all alone in the mountains

³³ Oakes 1951a 49.

³⁴ Ibid 49.

³⁵ McGuire xiv. In an unpublished statement about the mission of the Bollingen Foundation, Mary Mellon wrote: “we must have a reference point in each stage of Man’s eternal struggle for consciousness if we are not to lose all we have inherited.” (Cited in McGuire 68).

of Guatemala...I guess I wanted to feel sorry for myself.”³⁶ This statement points to her sense of the task of the anthropologist as an individual working in total isolation, somewhat masochistically (yet heroically) cut off from the comforts of life at home. Maud’s irritation at encountering fellow Americans also points to the fallacy in her thinking of Todos Santos as cut off from the world, but also to her openness to acknowledging her naïve narrative desires.

Three months after arriving in Todos Santos, Maud has her first breakthrough in connecting with the local chimanes. An important chimán, Domingo Calmo, stops at her house and asks if she has medicine that will help his hearing. She gives him a bottle of olive oil to clear out wax, but more importantly this moment signals that the religious leaders recognize her authority as a healer. In the wake of this visit, Maud establishes her unusual relationship with Don Pancho as an informant-detective. Sensing that she would be unable to ask the chimanes questions about their rituals (*costumbres* in Spanish) and the Maya calendar because of her status as a woman and an outsider, Maud hires Don Pancho to serve as her intermediary, whom she would coach in asking questions concerning religious rites. Don Pancho accepts this task, telling her that “At one time in my life...I was a detective, so I am very good at asking questions without the person knowing he is being questioned.”³⁷ Don Pancho thus comes to operate as a third point in the dialogical invention of culture—he becomes a middleman of sorts, a peripheral insider due to his status as Ladino, Mam-speaking Todosantero.³⁸

³⁶ Oakes 1951a 64.

³⁷ Ibid 99.

³⁸ Crapanzano, Vincent. *Tuhami: Portrait of a Moroccan*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010. 144. Writing in reference to himself and his interpreter, Lhacen, Crapanzano states that “As strangers we shared a kind of objectivity (see Schutz 1944; Nash 1963), a detachment even, that was rationalized in my case by my science and in Lhacen's case perhaps by the “job” he was performing for me. We shared a common intention: to learn as much as we could about the Hamadsha and about the people, like Tuhami, around them. In different ways, we were both entrapped in the formulations of that intention. The most significant of these, and for me, at least, the most personally distasteful, was the formulation—the creation—of the informant, whom I frequently confused, and still

Interestingly, while Maud felt it was necessary to have Don Pancho intervene to hide her interest in the religious practices of the chimanes, Paul Radin writes in his introduction to *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos* that “the whole thing was manifestly a fiction...the *chimanes* were answering the questions because they knew they were Miss Oakes’, and because she specifically was involved...Nevertheless all Miss Oakes’s precautions were not only advisable but essential for her success. The information she was seeking could probably have been obtained only by having recourse to just such a fiction.”³⁹

Along with information gleaned by Pancho, Maud soon developed a more personal relationship with Domingo Calmo after treating his wife for a skin infection. Although Maud was unable to diagnose the wife’s condition, she decided to treat her with a salve offered by Maud’s mother’s cook in New York, “who had told me it was good for all skin troubles.”⁴⁰ Maud’s reflection is quite honest, as she “prayed that the salve would work for I hadn’t the faintest idea what her trouble was.”⁴¹ The unknown salve luckily succeeded in curing the woman’s condition, and afterwards Domingo Calmo became her first informant among the Todos Santos chimanes. Maud understood that “As ‘doctor’ I gained an entrée that nothing else could have given me, not only into the homes but into the esoteric side of life as well, for I came to be considered a *chimán*.”⁴² When even the chimanes began coming to her for treatment, she assumed a position of

confuse in my reveries, with the “informer.” This confusion between an informant and an informer, between coercion and consent, is an interesting parallel to Maud and Pancho’s sense of the latter’s task as a form of espionage.

³⁹ Radin, Paul. Introduction. In *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos: Survivals of Mayan Religious Ritual*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1951. 12.

⁴⁰ Oakes 1951a 136.

⁴¹ Ibid 136.

⁴² Oakes 1951b 17.

authority in the town. And yet, the role was also one of profound risk. During a visit to Guatemala City, where a local doctor gave her serum and vaccines to distribute in Todos Santos, the “American-trained nurse had asked me if I realized the risk I was taking, treating the Indians. If one of them died, she had pointed out, they might all turn against me and kill me.”⁴³

This warning should be read as an instance of foreshadowing, for not much later in her fieldwork Maud confronts a serious medical crisis in Todos Santos. In November 1946, after Maud had been in the town for a year, a measles epidemic exploded in the department of Huehuetenango, paralyzing the region’s public health system. As she writes: “An epidemic of measles struck the pueblo, and the children died like flies, mainly because the Indians put their sick children in the sweat-baths, and most of them caught pneumonia when they came out. On top of this epidemic came whooping cough and a few cases of typhoid... I sent to the Bureau of Sanitation in Huehuetenango, but none came; they had too much sickness there themselves.”⁴⁴ During this time, she came to serve four hundred people a month.⁴⁵

Unlike Laura Bohannan in *Return to Laughter*, whose ethnographic account of epidemic is defined by her sense of helplessness,⁴⁶ Maud did have some professional training and prior experience in medicine.⁴⁷ Her fieldwork experience quickly became consumed by the labor of

⁴³ Oakes 1951a 156.

⁴⁴ Ibid 84.

⁴⁵ Oakes 1951b 17.

⁴⁶ “I hated it, I hated the unnecessary suffering they endured, hated my own incompetence, and felt quite unreasonably that it was somehow wrong for me not to be a doctor. I prayed, selfishly, that no friend of mind would ever turn to me for help beyond my power to give...the sick made me forget that I was an anthropologist with a job of work to do; in their presence I could not pretend that I was living a high and light-hearted adventure” (Bohannan 37).

⁴⁷ Maud also consulted with a doctor in Guatemala City, who gave her vaccines and medical supplies. “...My only previous training had been working in a children’s ward in a New York hospital when I was a debutante, and two Red Cross first-aid courses.” Oakes 1951a 155.

serving as the town's sole doctor. The picture she paints of local conditions is stark: "From early morning until six or seven at night I did nothing but see sick people...My bedroom, which had become office and dispensary as well, stank from the sick, unwashed bodies, and from the floor which was constantly spat upon or wee-wee'd on by babies...I hardly had time to eat, and the only time I had to myself was when I fell into bed exhausted at the end of the day."⁴⁸

With the arrival of an American friend from Chichicastenango, she organized a campaign to vaccinate children at the two local schools against smallpox, typhoid, diphtheria, and whooping cough.⁴⁹ During this time, Maud treated numerous children, including the granddaughter of a prominent chimán, Rafael Calmo, who, her neighbors Domingo and Patrona warned her, was a *brujo* (a chimán who specializes in injurious *costumbre*). Maud warned him that she likely could not save his grandchild, but in an attempt to save her, she administered sulfates. The child died two days later. In response, Calmo responded by accusing her of killing his granddaughter, and propagating a rumor that Maud was responsible for all the children's deaths in Todos Santos. The rumor tied together Maud's status as an outsider, her medical practice, and especially her vaccination drive, during which she had made a list of vaccinated children. The accusations were that "the *gringa* is the cause of all the deaths here; she has made a list of all the children. She is a Dueña de Cerro. She summons evil spirits from her land to kill the children, then she eats them, for she is a *bruja*."⁵⁰ As defined in *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos*, a *dueña de cerro* "is a name the Mames give to a supernatural being or spirit supposed to dwell on the mountain...The 'masters'

⁴⁸ Oakes 1951a 217.

⁴⁹ Ibid 246.

⁵⁰ Ibid 260.

are supposed to be golden-haired and fair-skinned and to ride a white horse.”⁵¹ In the wake of this incident, a resident of the town threatened to kill her and many in the town ostracized her.

In addition to the fear of disease and the profound collective anxiety provoked by the epidemic, Rafael Calmo’s accusations also stemmed from a professional and spiritual crisis provoked by Maud’s presence. Maud did all her medical work at no cost, and thus her labor threatened both the prestige and the livelihood of Todos Santos’s chimanes, who depended on payment from villagers for *costumbres* related to healing. While many were grateful and saw the benefits of her work, it was perhaps inevitable that some would resent her. As Don Pancho tells her, “you, Señorita, without realizing it, have taken [Rafael Calmo’s] patients away from him, and he has lost much money. Now the epidemic gives him a good chance to blame you for everything.”⁵² In his attempt to hold Maud responsible for the epidemic, Rafael Calmo was also attempting to reassert the authority of the chimanes as religious and medical leaders.

Where *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos* is concerned primarily with the ethnographic data gained through Maud’s collaboration in partnership with Don Pancho, *Beyond the Windy Place* reveals that the central aspect of her fieldwork was the vertiginous experience of working throughout this epidemic. In the accusations leveraged against her, not only Maud’s medical work, but her presence in Todos Santos, as well as her photography, were all brought into question. It is worth quoting at length the accusation of Marcelino Pablo—a Mam man from Todos Santos whom Maud had never met—as told to her by her informant Pancho. It offers a remarkable synthesis of anger, fear, and anxiety provoked by the epidemic, and by Maud’s impact on the town’s social ecology:

⁵¹ Oakes 1951b 17.

⁵² Oakes 1951a 265.

The people say that the *gringa* is the *Dueña de Cerro*. Look when she gazes through her little black machine. She pulls out a paper and there is the face of a person, that very person. These people that she sees in the machine are alive; they have on the same hats and coats. The people of this pueblo are gentle people, but when she comes with that machine they run away for fear of what she will do. When she takes a *matrata*,’—and here instead of using the word *retratar*, which means to photograph, he used the verb *matar*, to kill— ‘she carries away their spirits. This is the reason so many people die; she carries away their spirits on paper...It is for this reason that people die; she points her machine at them the way one kills a deer...Who knows the source of her power? You know very well that she carries away the spirit of the *gente*. I have seen them, the little images, the faces of the people were the same except that they had no color. I have also seen papers she has given friends. There they are, the same faces. How does she do this? Probably it is evil. She gives these papers away as presents. What is her work? Where does her money come from? Ah, who knows? She distributes medicine, gives it away free, now to one person, now to another, and they pay nothing. Ah, where is there nowadays a person who gives away presents for nothing in return?’⁵³

Portraiture is here cast as a weapon that steals the soul and violates the autonomy of the individual.⁵⁴ It reveals the anxieties provoked by the ethnographer’s presence, especially when their intentions do not fit into a pre-existing social role.⁵⁵ Maud is inexplicable in the logic of Guatemalan social hierarchy—she cannot be made sense of by local measures of labor, class, race, or gender except as a *dueña de cerro*, a witch.⁵⁶ As Anders Burman’s writing about anthropologists and *Kharisiri* (fat-stealing monsters) in Bolivia has shown, there is a long history of

⁵³ Ibid 266-267.

⁵⁴ Maud introduces the relationship between photography and violence early in her book, with an anecdote from her initial descent into Todos Santos: “I saw an old shepherd coming up the trail driving his sheep before him. Without thinking, I snapped his photograph. He cried out as if in agony, saying in Spanish: “What have you done to me?” I felt as if I had stuck a knife into him.” Oakes 1951a 5.

⁵⁵ Susan Sontag’s writing on photography also echoes some of the Todosanteros’ concerns with the power dynamics of photography and the circulation of images: “The camera doesn’t rape, or even possess, though it may presume, intrude, trespass, distort, exploit, and at the farthest reach of metaphor, assassinate...” Sontag, Susan. “In Plato’s Cave.” Essay. In *On Photography*, 3–26. NY, NY: Picador, 1977. 13.

⁵⁶ When Don Pancho later asks the chimán Rafael Calmo about his views on Maud, he is told: “Who is it that gives her all the money she has?...Why does she give medicine for nothing? Who pays her? She has a mozo who lives in the house next to her...Before she came he was very poor, his clothes were ragged, as were those of his wife and his children...Without doubt the gringa is his patrona and gives him money.” Oakes 1951a 279. I use the term witch here merely as an approximation, aware of the ways in which such a translation may erase the specific cultural genealogy of brujas and dueñas de cerro as hybrid beings uniquely situated in the stories and histories of the Guatemalan highlands.

anthropologists being seen as monsters by their informants. Burman argues that these accusations are a result of the anthropologist's uncertain status in the local moral economy, and the sense that they are figures close to institutions of (colonial, state, ecclesiastic) power. Accusations of monstrosity or *brujería* made against Maud at once tell us something about anthropology and about the function of rumors and the supernatural in Todos Santos in maintaining the existing social order from perceived threats, both internal and external.⁵⁷⁵⁸

In response to the accusations leveraged against her, Maud meets with several of the town's key religious leaders, including the respected chimán Tata Julian, and his brother Abelino Ramírez, who officiates at most funerals in the town, warning them that if they could not stem the rumors, she would no longer distribute medicine or treat anyone.⁵⁹ Taking up her friends' invitation to visit Chichicastenango, Maud leaves Todos Santos for two weeks in the hopes that the chimanes would be able to end the rumors in her absence. On her return, few of the villagers come to her for medical help, but the animosity that had been palpable in the air prior to her trip is gone.

It is this account that contradicts Maud's claim that Todos Santos is untouched by the machine age. Her very presence in the town is one small part of the experience of modernization and integration that Todosanteros lived through in the twentieth century, prior to the explosion of civil war in 1960, at which point any ethnographic representation of the Maya as outside of history became inconceivable. Ironically (or perhaps inevitably), in her attempt to reach a community

⁵⁷ Burman, Anders. "Are Anthropologists Monsters? An Andean Dystopian Critique of Extractivist Ethnography and Anglophone-Centric Anthropology." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 8, no. 1-2 (2018): 48–64. Burman tells a similar story of uncertainty regarding anthropologists from an Aymara woman: "What do they do, huh, with everything we tell them? And all the photos? They earn a lot of money, people say" (Burman 58).

⁵⁸ See also Adams, Abigail E. "Gringas, Ghouls and Guatemala: The 1994 Attacks on North American Women Accused Of Body Organ Trafficking." *Journal of Latin American Anthropology* 4, no. 1 (2008): 112–33. Although Adams analyzes the concept of the *gringa* in post-civil war Guatemala, her article is productive for considering the ways Maud was understood in Todos Santos as a *gringa*—that is, at the intersection of nation, race, and gender.

⁵⁹ Oakes 1951a 267.

untouched by modernity, Maud ended up accused of upending social relations and dislocating cultural norms around gifts, labor, healing, and representation. While *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos* documents the use of the Maya calendar and the specific rites and practices that have their origins in the precolonial past, in *Beyond the Windy Place* Maud more comprehensively exposes the ways in which her time in Todos Santos was marked by her presence and the already-underway processes of acculturation. While it is the text that was produced for a general readership, in many ways it serves as a richer historical source for understanding midcentury anthropology.

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In June 1944, shortly before Maud's arrival in Guatemala, the liberal dictator Jorge Ubico Castañeda had been forced from office by the "October Revolution," a largely urban, middle-class social movement that brought Juan José Arévalo Bermejo to office. According to Jim Handy, "the first government of the revolution passed a cornucopia of social and economic legislation, much of it inspired by Arévalo's philosophy. The economic and social policies of the Arévalo administration reflected a somewhat contradictory faith in the benefits of capitalism coupled with a determination to structure policies to benefit the less well-off."⁶⁰ Both Arévalo and his successor, Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, were forced to juggle the demands of an urban middle-class, foreign companies like United Fruit, and landed elites who had reaped the benefits of Guatemala's export economy, primarily driven by coffee in the early twentieth century, and were opposed to the politicians' economic and agricultural reform.

While the policies of Arévalo and the October Revolution were percolating across the highlands and the federal government was expanding its reach into indigenous communities with acculturating labor and education policies, Jennifer Burrell has written that the absence of

⁶⁰ Handy, Jim. *Revolution in the Countryside: Rural Conflict and Agrarian Reform in Guatemala, 1944-1954*. United States: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000. 25.

revolutionary fervor in Maud's work is not historically inaccurate; rather, it reflects the fact that Todos Santos remained under "a system of ladino domination, rigid land control, and capitalist anguish" during Maud's fieldwork.⁶¹ As a historical source, Maud's work thus attests to the limited reach of the Guatemalan state in the 1940s, even after the October Revolution. It is, however, worth mentioning that Maud's explicit consideration of the national political context is almost comical in its brevity: On a trip to Guatemala City, Maud writes: "Guatemala was on the verge of another revolution, and everyone prepared to dive into the cellar till it subsided. This was a frequent occurrence, so I was not very much alarmed."⁶²

After publishing her two books on Todos, a number of anthropologists, photographers, and filmmakers have returned to the town and offered more explicit historical analyses. Before shifting to consider Maud's writing on Todos Santos in light of her later interest in psychoanalysis, it is worth pausing to consider these later works. Jennifer Burrell's ethnography *Maya After War: Conflict, Power, and Politics in Guatemala* in particular stands out, as Burrell extensively documents the ongoing influence of Maud's work in the town. Burrell arrived in Todos Santos to conduct ethnographic work in the 1990s, and she was present for the signing of the peace accord that concluded a thirty-year civil war that scarred the Guatemalan highlands, leading to the displacement and deaths. By the time she arrived, *costumbre* and the *chimanes* had been repressed, and many aspects of everyday and clerical religious knowledge held by the Mam of Todos Santos had been erased as part of the genocidal state violence perpetuated by the Rios Montt regime.⁶³ Faced with the erasure of collective memory and practice, Burrell shows that Maud's work came

⁶¹ Ibid 24; Handy offers a discussion of the debate over illiterate citizens' voting rights during the October 1944 constitutional assembly. According to Handy, "after almost a month of debate, literate women were allowed to vote and illiterate men were permitted a public oral vote."

⁶² Oakes 1951a 88.

⁶³ Burrell 59.

to hold a unique role in a community-wide dialogue about cultural revitalization. As she writes, “*The Two Crosses of Todos Santos* assumed a significance of its own in situ. Following its publication, Oakes sent copies of the book to Todos Santos, and over the years, additional copies trickled in, mostly as gifts from visiting and returning travelers. By the mid-1990s, there were a handful of Oakes’s books in Todos Santos. For their owners and other Todosanteros, they had become objects of status and prestige and were a source of community pride.”⁶⁴ According to Burrell, while some residents had partial knowledge of the text, it was not until 2000 that Maud’s book was translated into Spanish by Burrell and a small group of Todosanteros and presented to the town in a series of history workshops.⁶⁵

After the war, during which Todos Santos was subject to the government’s scorched earth campaign and the mobilization of paramilitary forces, Maud’s work gained new meaning for Todosanteros. Rather than indulging their nostalgia, it allowed Todosanteros—both those living in the town and migrants in the US—to grapple with collective identity, memory, and cultural practice. Burrell’s decision to bring together people in Todos Santos to discuss the book’s significance also revealed the contested nature of its value: “Younger people as well as some teachers and community members grappling with what it meant to be Todosanteros in contemporary times embraced the ethnography as a sort of ‘sacred book,’ a designation the translators and others argued was appropriate because the book was a history of the religion of their ancestors... Others argued that though they didn’t think the ethnography should be a manual for reinvigorating a local practice of *costumbre*, it was significant as a book of stories, of information, ‘an inheritance for the community.’”⁶⁶ Maud’s work, and later photographic and

⁶⁴ Ibid 63.

⁶⁵ Ibid 72. “Parts of the translation were recorded in Spanish and Mam for those who couldn’t read.”

⁶⁶ Ibid 75.

video projects by Hans Namuth⁶⁷ and Olivia Carrescia⁶⁸ thus serve as historical sources for Todosanteros to negotiate the demands of the post-war world. Burrell in particular shows the remarkable work that can be done by bringing texts back to the “field,” and using them as a springboard to reflect on how cultural practices have changed and how local communities understand, recover, and struggle with written and visual representations of their past.

⁶⁷ See Namuth, Hans. *Los Todos Santeros: A Family Album of Mam Indians in the Village of Todos Santos Cuchumatán, Guatemala, C.A. 1947-1987*. Berlin: NiSHEN. 1989. Namuth, a celebrated portrait photographer most well-known for his portraits of abstract expressionist painters in New York, explicitly describes his project as visual sequel to Maud’s ethnographies, as he first came to the town and was introduced to the Todosanteros during her fieldwork: “The idea was to compile a permanent record of the Todos Santeros. I was mostly interested in the people, much less so in the architecture and the landscape. We had seen in other more accessible villages how fast the native population could enter the mainstream culture. We also discussed another important aspect of the plan: the faces of these peoples. I felt very strongly that the history of the Mayan race is written in these faces. For that reason, I wished to photograph people as much as possible in close-up, away from their habitat, their daily surroundings, but in the neutrality and coldness of a studio, with blank walls and nothing else; no distractions. Furthermore, I wished to use only black and white film. Color would conceal the trauma of their existence, their fight for survival, their sorrows and joys, their outer and inner joy... And thus, twenty-nine years after meeting Maud Oakes for the first time, I set out to write, with black and white photographs, a visual sequel to her study” (Namuth 18).

⁶⁸ The American documentarian Olivia Carrescia has produced an astonishing series of five films about Todos Santos that offer snap shots of the town over the course of forty years (1982-2011). Her first film predates the scorched earth campaigns of the Rios Montt regime, while her last two films explore the impact of the 2008 economic crisis on the town and the experiences of Todos Santos satellite communities in the United States.

*All of nature is in our patterns; we are not separate.*⁶⁹

Carl Jung

In a 1918 review of Carl Jung's oeuvre, the American anthropologist Alfred Kroeber wrote: "[If] the psychoanalysts are right, nearly all ethnology and cultural history are waste of effort, except in so far as they contribute new raw materials. If, on the other hand, current anthropological methods and the [diffusion-based] psycho-biological assumptions underlying them are correct, the phylogenetic theories of Jung and his collaborators are only a mistaken excrescence on...sounder [anthropological] work."⁷⁰ Kroeber, who founded the anthropology department at the University of California, Berkeley, was also Franz Boas's first doctoral student at Columbia University. His framing of an essential contradiction between psychoanalysis and anthropology is indicative of Boas's influence on a generation of American anthropologists.

Through his writing on historical particularism and diffusionism, Boas had challenged the dominant Anglo-American cultural evolutionary paradigm epitomized in the writing of E.B. Tylor. In rejecting the Victorian assumptions of unilinear cultural evolution, Boas offered an interpretive framework that was cautious of superficial likeness as the basis for cultural comparison and more concerned with local history than universal questions of humanity.⁷¹ As Robert Kenny has argued,

⁶⁹ Cited in Oakes 1987, 42.

⁷⁰ Cited in Groark, Kevin P. "Freud among the Boasians: Psychoanalytic Influence and Ambivalence in American Anthropology." *Current Anthropology* 60, no. 4 (2019): 559–88. 565.

⁷¹ Kenny, Robert. "Freud, Jung and Boas: the Psychoanalytic Engagement with Anthropology Revisited." *Notes and Records: the Royal Society Journal of the History of Science* 69, no. 2 (2015): 173–90. 178.

“Boas’s objection to evolutionist anthropology was its presumption that like effects were the products of like causes and as such demonstrated universal laws of mental and social progress.”⁷² For Boas, synchronic anthropological data was only of interpretive value if there was a parallel inquiry into the local history that shaped cultural forms.

While Kroeber’s review of Jung points to a fissure between Boas and psychoanalysis (be it Freudian or Jungian) in the interpretation of ethnographic material, this staging of conflict represents only one moment in the history of the two disciplines. The antagonism Boas held for Freud and Jung did not keep his students and peers from finding ways to incorporate and sustaining dialogue with psychoanalytic theory. In fact, Kroeber himself went on to receive training as a psychoanalyst, and briefly dropped his anthropological research to devote himself to clinical work in the early 1920s.⁷³ Meanwhile, after the 1909 Clark University Lectures, which featured lectures by Boas, Jung, and Freud, Freud and Jung became increasingly concerned with the psychoanalytic relevance of ethnographic data.⁷⁴

As Adam Kuper has argued, many of Boas’s students turned to psychoanalysis precisely because Boas’s diffusionist arguments were highly empirical, but rarely speculative. Boas set out to answer the question of *how* culture changed, but not *why*, and the rejection of cultural evolution left an unfilled vacuum in providing a general explanatory schema for culture at a global level.⁷⁵ To again return to Kroeber, this can be summed up in his warning about the limits of Boasian

⁷² Ibid 177.

⁷³ Groark 560.

⁷⁴ Kenny 174-176. As Kenny argues, “[Freud and Jung’s] turn to anthropological and mythological material were responses to a suddenly recognized challenge to the evolutionist paradigm...” Kenny speculates, based on epistolary evidence, that both Jung and Freud attended Boas’s lecture at the Clark lectures, entitled “Psychological Problems in Anthropology” and were compelled to respond to a perceived threat to their evolutionary model of mind and culture.

⁷⁵ Ibid 132.

ethnology: “As long as we continue offering the world only reconstructions of specific detail, and consistently show a negativistic attitude towards broader conclusions, the world will find very little of profit in ethnology. People do want to know why.”⁷⁶

One of Boas’s primary concerns was with data collection—a continental salvage operation in the face of rapid cultural assimilation of American Indians, of which he took part in his work with the Kwakiutl. He was also powerfully concerned with instilling cultural relativism and countering racism, which is an essential dimension of his rejection of Eurocentric evolutionist schema. Meanwhile, Jung and Freud were using psychology to advance broader critiques of modernity. Indeed, Jung insisted that the significance of referring to ethnographic material was to indicate the failings of modernization: “I am not denying that great gains have resulted from the evolution of civilized society. But these gains have been made at the price of enormous losses... Part of the purpose of my comparisons between the primitive and the civilized states of man has been to show the balance of these losses and gains.”⁷⁷ While anthropology had its own modes of critical comparison, perhaps Boas’s students gleaned from psychoanalysis a new heuristic for social critique despite its unfashionable assumptions about the evolution of mind and culture.⁷⁸

While psychoanalysis’s reliance on an evolutionary theory of mind that equated primitive thought with Western neuroses⁷⁹ was abhorrent to Boas and his students, Freud’s writings on the

⁷⁶ Kroeber is cited in Kuper, Adam. “The Boasians and the Critique of Evolutionism.” Essay. In *The Reinvention of Primitive Society: Transformations of a Myth*, 115–34. London: Routledge, 2005. 131.

⁷⁷ Jung, C. G., Joseph L. Henderson, Marie-Louise von Franz, Aniela Jaffé, and Jolande Jacobi. “Approaching the Unconscious.” Essay. In *Man and His Symbols*, 1–94. Bowdon, Cheshire, England: Stellar Classics, 2013. 36.

⁷⁸ As Groark argues, “From an anthropological perspective, Freud’s dual commitments to a panhuman sequence of social evolution paired with assumptions of phylogenetic transmission of psychological content led to the logical error of assuming an isomorphism between a ‘primitive’ stage of social development and the ‘primitive’ developmental and psychological states he had observed in his patients.”

⁷⁹ In the introduction to *Totem and Taboo*, Freud writes: “...a comparison of the ‘Psychology of Primitive Races’ as taught by folklore, with the psychology of the neurotic as it has become known through psychoanalysis, will reveal numerous points of correspondence and throw new light on subjects that are more or less familiar. For out as well as for inner reasons, I am choosing for this comparison those tribes which have been described by ethnographers as

unconscious, repression, transference, and both his and Jung's work on symbols and dream interpretation had permeated the discipline of anthropology by the mid-twentieth century. Maud Oakes was primarily influenced by Jung, but here I will draw from both Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis. Jung's theories evolved from his dialogue with Freud, and as Kenny has shown, after the 1909 Clark Lectures, both Freud and Jung responded to Boas's critique of psychoanalysis by integrating ethnographic data into their work. Despite their differences, both Freud and Jung shaped and were shaped by anthropology in compelling ways. Below, I will examine the explanatory frameworks of culture and mind, the use of interviews, and the central role of writing in each discipline to consider the convergences and divergences of the two. This is in no way a comprehensive overview of the intellectual and cultural contexts in which psychoanalysis and anthropology developed; rather, I offer a selective reading of some key interpretive and methodological nodes through which the two disciplines become entangled.

In reading about the practice and historical development of psychodynamic psychiatry and psychoanalysis, I have come to see psychoanalysis and anthropology as sharing certain explanatory structures and narrative techniques. This is most notable in the centrality of the concepts of the unconscious and culture—two fields which constitute a priori matrices that structure individual agency. To simplify somewhat the complexity and nuance of the two disciplines' evolution, we could say that each sought to identify a primary organizing principle or structure that predetermines our actions and calls into question the autonomy of the individual as a rational actor.

being most backward and wretched: the aborigines of the youngest continent, namely Australia..." Freud, Sigmund. *Totem and Taboo: Resemblances between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1918. 4.

Despite the Boasian critique of evolutionism, both psychoanalysis and anthropology solidified as disciplines in similar circumstances in the wake of Darwin and the emergence of prehistory. Despite their differences, they shared a common set of driving concerns as human sciences. In Maud's work, this entanglement is made clear in her description of Jung as an archeologist digging to uncover layers of consciousness, and her sense that the Maya can be "excavated" through ethnographic description as evidence of an uncontaminated precolonial religiosity.⁸⁰ Prehistory and archeology thus come to serve as metaphors for the accretion of cultural and psychic development in legible, separable layers of mind and culture. Thus, while anthropology and psychoanalysis are at odds in their notions of cultural and cognitive determinism, they also have deep affinities in their nineteenth-century origins.

As for methodology, there are clear parallels between psychotherapy and ethnography in terms of their use of interviews as a performative staging of the self and other. Whereas anthropology has no clear clinical practice equivalent to psychotherapy—as Doug Hollan has written, informants are not patients intent on alleviating suffering⁸¹—this correspondence has made me curious about the psychological effects of ethnographic research. In her ethnography of psychiatric practice in the United States, *Of Two Minds*, Tania Luhmann addresses this dimension of analysis:

⁸⁰ Oakes 1987 30. Maud writes: "I compare Jung's explorations and discoveries to those of an archeologist, one who finds an ancient temple overgrown by a vast and unknown jungle. Over a period of many years, perhaps a lifetime, the obliterating jungle is cleared away, and the temple is seen to be a small part of a large city. The city unfolds its intricate plan as the vegetation is removed little by little...During all this time, with the use of a scientific eye and profound comparative knowledge, the archeologist tabulates and fits together his findings like a puzzle, forming definite patterns." With archeology as a metaphor for ethnographic and psychoanalytic work, there is an implicit assumption of a pristine foundation, time's passage accruing atop yet without disturbing the sediment of mind and culture."

⁸¹ Hollan, Douglas. "Setting a New Standard: The Person-Centered Interviewing and Observation of Robert I. Levy." *Ethos* 33, no. 4 (2005): 459-66. 462.

The analyst has his own sense of who he is in the analytic setting; so too does the patient. Each has a kind of ‘second self’: the patient presents himself as more miserable than most of his colleagues think he is; the analyst presents himself as more competent than most of his colleagues think *he* is. In fact, Schafer says, the relationship between analyst and analysand—between their second selves—is ‘fictive.’ The two create it together. It is their own narrative, and it is a story about who they are to each other. That, Schafer says, is what makes analysis work as therapy.⁸²

This passage renders the psychiatric field as a theater in which both therapist and patient perform and externalize a certain self, therefore objectifying it. As Paul Rabinow shows in *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* and Vincent Crapanzano in *Tuhami: Portrait of a Moroccan*, ethnographic interviews are frequently based on a similar mode of externalization—of culture instead of selfhood—; an intersubjective, dialogical practice that does not so much render culture interpretable as invented.⁸³

If such a practice is seen as therapeutic in more psychodynamic strains of psychiatry, what are we to make of ethnography? So much of the discipline’s (and my) attention has been focused on textual processes and the synthesis of experience that occurs after the anthropologist leaves the field, I wonder what we are to make of the interview experience for informants. What are its lasting effects on their own engagement with culture and the opaque figure of the anthropologist? Are there forms of transference possible in such an encounter that exceed the orthodox psychoanalytic

⁸² Luhrmann, T.M. *Of Two Minds an Anthropologist Looks at American Psychiatry*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2001. 65.

⁸³ Crapanzano writes about this sense in which ethnographic interviews become stages for mutual self-invention: “[Tuhami] was able...not only to create the relationship he desired but to create me, for himself, as well. I presented him with minimum resistance, but, through insistence and the direction of my questions, resistance all the same.” (Crapanzano 14). Later in the text, Crapanzano represents a certain epiphany concerning the anthropologist’s interpretive responsibility in engaging with the partial fictions of self-representation in the interview context: “I did not then understand that the real was a metaphor for the true—and not identical with it. Tuhami had been speaking the truth from the very start, even in his interviews with Lhacen, but I had been listening only for the real, which I mistook for the true.” As in psychoanalysis, Crapanzano comes to see Tuhami’s narrative as speaking a truth even where it diverges from the real. The interview allows Tuhami space for self-invention, which is then rearticulated by Crapanzano through the depersonalized concept of culture. In this way, both anthropology and psychoanalysis are attentive to this distinction between the real and true, between the verifiable and the veritable.

context?⁸⁴ Luhrmann's text weaves together psychotherapy and anthropology in ways I had not anticipated. She makes it hard for me to conceive of Maud's transition from ethnography to psychoanalysis as a rupture: Despite the vast differences between midcentury anthropology and Jungian analytic psychology, the two practices are linked through this reflexive and theatrical staging of the self in ways that contradict Maud's own interpretation of her work.

In addition to the staging context of interviews and their concern with the a priori fields of culture and psyche, both Tania Luhrmann and Janet Malcolm's accounts of psychoanalysis point to the centrality of writing and narration in psychoanalytic interpretation. Since the 1970s anthropology has also been increasingly concerned with the ways in which writing obscures and produces truth. Reading Luhrmann and Malcolm showed me that to a significant degree, psychoanalysis is also centrally concerned with the production of narratives, with the success of a training analysis determined by the analyst's capacity to explain a case to an absent supervisor. Both anthropology and psychoanalysis are human sciences with deeply ambiguous standards for verifiability. Two quotes below, the first by Janet Malcolm and the second from Tania Luhrmann indicate this overlap:

Unlike the rest of medicine, the teacher sees the student perform very rarely. In surgery, there may be a see-one, do-one, teach-one approach to cutting, but a senior surgeon hovers by a student's elbow. In most cases, a psychotherapy supervisor never sees a patient in person. In many cases, the supervisor never sees a video of the session or listens to a tape recording of it. Instead, the resident and supervisor meet at a prearranged time, the resident tells the supervisor what went on in the session, and the supervisor advises the resident on what to do next.⁸⁵

⁸⁴As I indicated earlier, Jennifer Burrell's work in Todos Santos Cuchumatán offers one possible field to respond to these questions—ethnographic work is not only archived by the university; the communities described often come to see the descriptions as relevant contexts for debating their pasts. Maud's work also makes clear that ethnographic legacies are not purely symbolic; she helped pay off debts for many of her friends and informants and thus continued to shape local social and economic relations even after her departure.

⁸⁵ Luhrmann 60.

In the Dora paper, Freud illustrates the double vision of the patient which the analyst must maintain in order to do his work: he must invent the patient as well as investigate him; he must invest him with the magic of myth and romance as well as reduce him to the pitiful bits and pieces of science and psychopathology.⁸⁶

In describing the concerns of representing ethnographic and analytic experiences, Luhrmann and Malcolm show that the truth of psychoanalytic training and clinical work is trapped in the black box of the analyst-ethnographer's subjectivity. The psychiatric resident's supervising analyst does not attend the resident's sessions with patients, nor do they listen to recordings.⁸⁷ Rather, the training is supervised and evaluated based on the resident's subsequent capacity to render truth through narrative. As Luhrmann writes, "when psychoanalysts tell stories, they are learning to figure out the emotional-motivation-behavior bundles that...explain the way people in the story relate. *Telling the story well (convincingly) demonstrates their mastery.*"⁸⁸ Thus, like the anthropologist who must undermine herself, constantly questioning how cultural assumptions distort her vision, the psychoanalyst is aware that his interpretation is made through layers of conscious and unconscious distortion.

So far, I have sought to show how anthropology and psychoanalysis emerged in response to similar cultural concerns and contexts but took divergent paths in articulating the forces that impinge on us as individuals. In particular, I have focused on the interpretive challenges faced by analyst and ethnographer and the dialogical nature of their engagement with social facts. Clearly, both disciplines were also responding to the conditions of modernization as an economic, social, and technological process in the early and mid-twentieth century; the fields cannot be understood

⁸⁶ Malcolm, Janet. *Psychoanalysis: The Impossible Profession*. Granta Books, 2018. 101.

⁸⁷ As Laurie Hart pointed out to me, this absence parallels the analyst's position vis-à-vis the analysand's experiences.

⁸⁸ Malcolm 72, my emphasis.

without considering colonialism and decolonization, the increasing integration of the global economy, and the emergence of new forms of communication, representation, and transportation. These broader historical contexts are essential to understanding their directions, but they are beyond the scope of my paper. Maud's modernism, her milieux, her engagement with Jung is clearly tied into the geopolitics and economic changes of her time, yet my task has been to start with her words and move outwards. Maud's writing on Todos Santos and psychoanalysis are both deeply personal accounts that represent a sliver of the kaleidoscopic changes she observed in herself and in the world. It is to this vision that I turn to now.

In his introduction to *The Stone Speaks*, Joseph Henderson wrote that Maud's memoir was organized around the three-part psychological healing process outlined in analytic psychology: meditation, healing, and transformation.⁸⁹ Perhaps this division is also a useful one in considering her oeuvre in its totality. In both her ethnographic and psychoanalytic work, Maud sought to document and perform her own psychic transformation. Beginning with her ethnographic initiation in New Mexico and Todos Santos to her later engagement with Jung, she sought to give meaning to her own life and, like many other mid-century intellectuals, struggled against the pessimism induced by living through two world wars.⁹⁰ While meditation, healing, and transformation are not clearly defined, nor experienced in a clear chronological sequence throughout her oeuvre, they represent a set of concerns that can be noted in Maud's work.

⁸⁹ Oakes 1987, xiii.

⁹⁰ Two relevant texts that embody the despair of the inter and post-war era—specifically Nazism, as both authors fled their homes due to the specific targeting of Jews—are Sigmund Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* and Claude Levi-Strauss's *Tristes Tropiques*.

Meditation

The Stone Speaks was published in 1986, but it represents nearly thirty years of draft revisions, long hiatuses in writing, and finally somewhat reluctant publication near the end of Maud's life, at a point when she was struggling with Alzheimer's.⁹¹ The text takes as its starting point a dramatic incident, here cast as an inevitable, perhaps preordained reorientation of her research. As documented in a chapter simply entitled "Disaster," in April of 1951 Maud left her home in Big Sur to begin ethnographic work in Ecuador and Peru. Her intention was to find a community like Todos Santos—isolated, rural, and indigenous—where she could document the survivals of Inca culture in the Andes.

If the chapter title were not enough to indicate the conclusion of her trip, it begins with an exchange with the writer Henry Miller, her neighbor and friend in Big Sur. Maud writes that on the day prior to her departure for Lima, Miller stopped at her house and warned her that he had received an apparition from a Helena Blavatsky, who warned him that Maud would experience "danger, despair, destruction, disillusionment, and disaster" if she were to follow through with her travel plans.⁹² Despite this ominous and alliterative premonition, Maud did travel to Lima. From there, she set north towards Huaraz, a city in the northern Peruvian Andes associated with the pre-Incan Chavin culture. While crossing a 13,000-foot pass in the Andes in the evening, the lights went out on Maud's jeep. She and her travel companion, a Peruvian woman named Carmen, were forced to stop. Eventually, a truck driver passes and offered to escort them down the pass, driving

⁹¹ William McGuire's forward to *The Stone Speaks* offers an overview of Maud's writing timeline and McGuire's encouragement in turning the work into a publishable volume: Maud had initially seen the work as a private endeavor, and then a draft to be privately circulated among training analysts.

⁹² Oakes 1987 2.

in front of them, with his rear lights serving as guidance down the steep pass. Descending the pass, her jeep slid off a cliff face, tumbling to a stop in a ravine below. Maud writes:

As the smell of gas grew stronger, we tried to get out. It was terrifying. We felt trapped, for jagged glass was everywhere. All the windows had been broken, except for half a sliding one which we finally managed to pull back. We squeeze through it and pulled ourselves onto the upturned side of the car...I had found splinters of glass even in my mouth, so I climbed down to the river to wash my mouth. I also washed my eyes, for I had felt something in them and feared that this too might be glass.⁹³

Beyond her physical injuries, Maud was traumatized from her near-death experience in the Andes, and subsequently lost interest in her ethnographic research. While she continued to travel throughout her life, to my knowledge she never returned to Latin America after 1951. What does it mean for Maud to conceive of this incident as a moment of redirection? What did analytic psychology offer her that was distinct from her earlier research agenda? Did the 1954 coup d'état in Guatemala further demoralize her from pursuing ethnographic work? While Maud did not conduct further anthropological research, I have already indicated some ways in which ethnographic and psychoanalytic work overlap, both methodologically and in their textual practices. In doing so, I have sought to show there are continuities between the two traditions that perhaps contradict Maud's own sense of rupture.

Healing

In the aftermath of the crash, Maud had a fractured vertebra in her neck and a bent coccyx. After initial treatment in a hospital in Lima, she was airlifted back to New York City. From there she travelled on to France to convalesce at the home of her cousin, the American filmmaker Jerome Hill, who was working on a biographical film about Carl Jung. While at Hill's home in Cassis, Maud had the opportunity to accompany him to Jung's home on Lake Zurich, called Bollingen

⁹³ Ibid 7.

(the inspiration for Mary Mellon's eponymous foundation). There, she unexpectedly encountered the titular stone of *The Stone Speaks*, a large carved stone cube engraved by Jung over a period of two years. According to Maud, upon seeing the stone, "it seemed to say, 'I am a Stone that heals, makes whole, if you become aware of my significance for you.'"⁹⁴ This message transformed Jung's stone into an object of meditation and research that helped her heal, and perhaps gave her an excuse to shift away from her earlier anthropological research. Maud thus writes that "I have always felt that life is an endless series of tests and trials to be confronted and surmounted as we go on our 'way.' When I finally recognized that my Peruvian accident was such a test and tried to understand its meaning, the way to the Stone opened."⁹⁵ For Maud the stone was a vehicle for healing, and a test, a riddle posed that pushed her away from earlier concerns.

The frontal image of the stone contains an eclectic mixture of classical and medieval symbols and scripts, inspired in part by Jung's reading of alchemical texts and dreams. After Maud left Bollingen, she returned to New York, where Jerome Hill sent her a set of tapes featuring Jung describing the motivation and significance of the stone. He is quoted in *The Stone Speaks* explaining the frontal image:

On the center face of the Stone, it is a large circle within a square. Inside this circle is a much smaller circle, like the hub of a wheel, and within the hub stands a figure. It is dressed in a hood with a short cape and on its body is the sign of the planet Mercury. In its left hand is a lantern and the right hand seems to be pointing....in the part to the left is the sun; in the part to the right, the moon....⁹⁶

Note that Jung's description, of which I have taken but a short excerpt, is purely descriptive. He offers no interpretation of the symbolism, nor does he describe his intention in sculpting it. For

⁹⁴ Oakes 13.

⁹⁵ Oakes 70.

⁹⁶ Carl Jung, quoted in Oakes 13-14.

the following year, Maud centered her life around interpreting the stone. She wrote that “even though it was not carved for me, its effect on me was like that of a Navaho sand painting on the patient for whom it is made. I was slowly recovering from my illness. Meditating on the Stone was therapeutic for me, psychically as well as physically.... During the next year I continued to work on the stone and it worked on me. At times it was a difficult and subjective experience not unlike an analysis, for it seemed that I had made a transference to the Stone in the way an analyst transfers expectations for a basic change onto the analyst.”⁹⁷

Transformation

As I have mentioned, *The Stone Speaks* took Maud over thirty years to write. Early in the book, she included a series of correspondences she had with Jung in 1956 based on an early manuscript she had completed. When she turned to Jung for comments on an early draft, Jung responded kindly yet somewhat dismissively that “you express yourself...as if my symbol and my text were sort of a confession of a belief. Thus it looks as if I were moving in the vicinity of Theosophy. In America, especially, one blames me for my so-called mysticism. Since I don’t claim at all to be the happy proprietor of metaphysical truths, I should prefer that you attribute to my symbols the same tentativeness which characterizes your explanatory attempts...[My symbols] are mere allusions, they hint at something, they stammer and often lose their way...They are just no Gnosis, no metaphysical assertions. They are partly even futile or dubious attempts at pronouncing the ineffable.”⁹⁸ Thus, her earlier intention to treat Jung (or the Stone itself) as a medicine man could be seen as assuming a false sense of intention—the Stone had no imperative to heal. It was

⁹⁷ Oakes 1987, 15.

⁹⁸ Jung quoted in Oakes 1987, 18. Letter dated February 2, 1956.

not wrong for Maud to turn to the Stone for healing, her mistake was only in assuming that the Stone could be an authority in her search for meaning. As its author, Jung did not fully know what the stone expressed, for the symbols both proceeded and exceeded his knowledge. As Jung wrote in *Approaching the Unconscious*, symbols imply “something vague, unknown, or hidden from us.”⁹⁹ Where Freud sees the unconscious as a maelstrom of repressed desires and irrational drives to be decoded, for Jung symbolic expression indicates that the unconscious functions more positively, as an aid or teacher, a sort of second self that transmits lessons and meaning in symbolic and oneiric expressions.

The Stone Speaks is a perplexing and disorderly narrative, a blur of Jungian dream analysis, an experience on LSD, citations from Lao Tzu on the Tao, reflections on Amerindian creation myths, alchemy, and an extended imagined dialogue with Hermes on astrology—this last character an interlocutor who comes to Maud after seven years of Jungian analysis in San Francisco in the late 1950s and early 1960s.¹⁰⁰ Interspersed with these disjunctive analytic fragments there is a memoir that traces Maud’s life from childhood to late in her life. Through this chronological and thematic weave, the boundaries of myth and life become blurred, and Maud embeds her own life and dream symbols into a universal, pantheistic idiom of birth, growth, death. In this way, everything becomes preordained, everything explicable by the action of an unknown, perhaps unknowable power. Maud’s life is traced out onto the archetypes of Jung.

In the end, *The Stone Speaks* is fundamentally concerned with the self, but Maud’s goal is not a clearer delineation of the boundaries of subjectivity, but rather a dissolution of the self into the infinite and timeless terrain of myth. Maud’s final transformation, then, turns out not to be

⁹⁹ Jung 3.

¹⁰⁰ Oakes 1987, 57.

about the self, but about placing herself into a map of collective consciousness. Where Maud had initially conceived of the stone as an analyst capable of effecting a personal transformation, her writing instead performs a subordination of the self to a symbolic system. Rather than self-discovery, her endeavor concludes in self-erasure.

Conclusion: The Modernism of Maud Oakes

When I lived with the Indians, time seemed not to exist. It had no importance. I was part of nature, one with nature, and so experienced still another type of time: eternal time, eternity that has no beginning nor end.”¹⁰¹

Maud Oakes, The Stone Speaks

To borrow a question from Gregory Bateson, what is the pattern that connects?¹⁰² For Bateson, this question concerns the modes of communication inherent to all life, but in reference to Maud, it pushes us to consider her idiosyncratic and at times frantic participation in varied intellectual projects, ultimately determined by a search for a universal underlying feature that could connect them. Maud’s oeuvre is a patchwork fabricated from heterogeneous modes of thought. Seen in its totality, it offers a strange and disorienting collage of modernist discourses that sit together uneasily, and yet which together reveal connections that might otherwise go unseen.¹⁰³ Beyond her engagement with anthropology and psychoanalysis, underlying her oeuvre is the esoteric influence of theosophy. According to William McGuire, in 1943 and 1944 Maud attended classes given by the Theosophist and Egyptologist Natacha Rambova.¹⁰⁴ Rambova’s

¹⁰¹ Oakes 1987 104.

¹⁰² Bateson, Gregory. *Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity*. Toronto: Bantam Books. 1980. 8.

¹⁰³ In Maud’s work, both anthropology and psychoanalysis must be understood as modernist projects with an essential aesthetic dimension. As David Harvey argues in *The Condition of Postmodernity*, modernism was concerned with evoking and contesting an “overwhelming sense of fragmentation, ephemerality, and chaotic change” and simultaneously a sense of something “eternal and immutable.” In her encounter with the Mam of Todos Santos, and in Jungian analysis, Maud found a way to confront, or at least bear this central polarity of modernism. Harvey, David. “Modernity and Modernism.” *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers. 1989. 10-38.

¹⁰⁴ See Nelson, Glen. “A Séance in the Mormon Tabernacle: Art and Spiritualism of Natacha Rambova.” Mormon Artists Group, July 2009. Web.

“compelling interest was the universal pattern of symbolism, which she believed was based on the mysteries of initiation practiced on the continent of Atlantis and dispersed during prehistoric times in the New World and the Old. The secrets of the Mayans and the Incan civilizations, when revealed, would corroborate the Atlantean sources.”¹⁰⁵ I do not see Rambova’s tutorage as providing a simplistic “missing link” between Maud’s early and later work; rather, it is indicative of the confluence of spiritual and cultural forces which drove Maud’s search for meaning in life, and as such underwrote her project. If ethnography early on allowed her to enter the world and experience it directly—in her mind, through a culture that was one with nature—psychoanalysis later provided the tools for her to synthesize her early experiences and reconcile them with the trauma that followed from her accident in Peru.

Along with Rambova’s influence, one area of concern that remains to be explored is Maud’s relationship to Latin America as an American. Unfortunately, she rarely alluded explicitly to her participation in or relationship to the Latin American intelligentsia, although we know she spent time in Mexico City and Guatemala City in the 1940s, and even chose to conduct research in Guatemala after consulting with Miguel Covarrubias.¹⁰⁶ While there are clear traces of the influence of Rambova, Mellon, and Paul Radin in her writing, further archival work would be needed to understand how Maud understood her position as an American working in Guatemala and Peru. In a secondhand anecdote Jennifer Burrell shared with me, during the Guatemalan Civil War the chimanes of Todos Santos apparently wrote to Maud for help. She is

¹⁰⁵ McGuire 89.

¹⁰⁶ One of Maud’s paintings from the *Where the Two Came to Their Father* series is held in the Museo Franz Mayor in Mexico City. The Mexican curator and art historian Daniel Garza Usabiaga has also found images of Maud with his grandmother in Mexico City in the 1950s in his family archive. See Garza Usabiaga, Daniel. *El Gran Malentendido: Wolfgang Paalen En México y El Surrealismo Disidente De La Revista DYN*. Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 2018. 168-169.

said to have written back to them that their culture had survived five hundred years of colonialism and would survive for five hundred more without her help.¹⁰⁷

How did Maud understand the Guatemalan civil war (and the CIA-backed coup d'état which initiated it)? How did she reconcile her conception of the Mam as people living in eternity, in a time “that has no beginning nor end,” with their undeniable experience of modernity in the form of an American-backed war?¹⁰⁸ While Maud frames her turn to Jung as a mode of healing, perhaps it should also be seen as an escape from the reality of her friends and informants in Todos Santos, whose mythic isolation had erupted into war. Herein lies the danger of the modernist project that Maud sought, at times through anthropology, psychoanalysis, or myth: That of obscuring the very real, materialist conditions of her world in favor of self-discovery.

This text, like Maud's ethnographies, is tied to my own time and place. It archives my path through her work, and hopefully lays the groundwork for a return to Todos Santos, seventy-five years after her departure. While Maud's journey took the form of an inward spiral, the project of interpreting her life and legacy has taken me in the opposite direction. Only by contextualizing her work—biographically, intellectually, and historically—have I come to understand her oeuvre. Although she provides a teleology to explicate the shift from anthropology to psychoanalysis, I remain convinced that her strongest intellectual contribution lies in her ethnographic writing. Her fateful crash in the Andes may have led her to Jung, but it is not clear to me that Jung led her to solid ground; rather, she became trapped in the false hopes that he and his stone could lead to healing and transformation.

¹⁰⁷ Personal communication.

¹⁰⁸ Oakes 1987 104.

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